THE CHRISTIANS PATTERN, or The Imitation of CHRIST

Printed by R. Daniell for Iohn Clarke at the Chappell in Chancery-lane 1659.

THE CHRISTIANS PATTERN;

Or

A DIVINE TREATISE of the IMITATION of CHRIST.

Written Originally in Latine, by THOMAS of KEMPIS, above 200. Years since.

LONDON,
Printed by *R. Daniel*, and are to be sold by *John Clark*, at *Mercers Chappel in Cheap-side*. 1659.

To the
READER.

Amongſt the many Conſiderations *which clearly evince the great* Worth *and ſpeciall* Excellencies *of this divine* Treatiſe, *ſuch as* Theſe *would not be unremembred.*

That it hath been tranſlated into very many languages, viz. Greek, Italian, French, Spaniſh, Dutch, Engliſh, *&c. Some Travellers affirm they have ſeen it alſo in the* Turkiſh *language. And in moſt of theſe languages, as well as in the Latine in which originally it was written, it hath been very often printed; Scarce hath any other Practicall and Devotionall Diſcourſe been publiſhed oftener; And that with ſo generall an approbation and acceptance; This golden* Manual *having had the ſingular happineſſe and priviledge to be kindly entertain'd by Chriſtians of different denominations.*

But that which doth fully ſpeak the true Worth *and* Excellency *of it,*

s the main Deſigne *and* Scope, *the* Matter *and* Argument *of the Book*, *eing indeed the very ſame with the Intendment and Deſigne of the Goſpel, he Scope and End of Chriſtianity, which in ſhort is* The being transformed into the Image of Chriſt, *r, in our Author's language*, the Imitation *or* Following of Chriſt *n Humility, Patience, Benignity and Goodneſſe, entire Self-reſignation to he will of God*, &c. *In theſe and the ike particulars doth the Author place our Reſemblance of Chriſt, which yet are not here ſpoken to in a formal Method, but are ſcattered through this Treatiſe, yet ſo as to be eaſily obſerved by a ſerious Reader.*

Now there is nothing more precious, more dear to God then his own Image, his own Life from the which Wicked men are ſaid to be eſtranged, Epheſ. 4. *And there is nothing higher, nothing more excellent then the* Participation of the Divine Nature, *then the Reſemblance of God who is the firſt and Supreme Excellency, then* the Imitation

tation of Christ *who is the highest, the most perfect and lovely Pattern and* Idea *of all purity and holinesse. Besides there is nothing more essentiall to the constituting of a true Christian, then the denying of himself, the taking up of his Crosse, & following of Christ.*

All along in this Treatise there are to be found the seeds and principles of the most necessary and Practicall Truths, together with many inward and experimentall discoveries of the Kingdome of God in us, *and the Processe of Regeneration: so that a serious Christian may meet with that which will be very proper & suitable to him to consider and make use of, in the severall exercises of his Christian warfare. The truth of this is faithfully witnessed to by many religious and holy Souls, who have profest that in the reading of this Spirituall Book they have found that which hath been (through the goodnesse of God) very profitable to direct and instruct, to revive and comfort, to strengthen & establish them in their present state & Condition.*

The Author of this Treatise was a serious and diligent Observer of the Kingdome of God within him, and speaks of the inward things of Religion, as one that did carefully mind the power and Energy of Truth in his own soul.

And now what remains, but to add humble & hearty desires to the God of all grace, the Father of lights, that he would prepare good & honest hearts *for the receiving of those Truths which so mainly concern* Life *and* Godliness: *& that it may please him so to prosper what is here written of the true* Imitation of Christ, *as that they that read, may be formed into the likeness of Christ and follow his steps; that being in the world as He was in the world, and being changed into his image from glory to glory, they may at last be with him where he is, and behold the glory which God hath given him, and so for ever be with the Lord.*

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FINIS.

THE

THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the imitation of Christ, and contempt of all worldly vanities.

HE *that followeth me, walketh not in darkneſſe*, ſaith the Lord. Theſe are the words of Chriſt; by which we are admoniſhed, that we ought to imitate his life and manners, if we will be truly inlightened, and be delivered from all blindneſſe of heart. Let therefore our chiefeſt endeavour be to meditate upon the life of Ieſus Chriſt.

2. The doctrine of Chriſt exceedeth all the doctrines of holy men; and he that hath the Spirit, will find therein an hidden Manna. But it falleth out, that many, who often hear the Goſpel of Chriſt, are yet but litle affected, becauſe they are void of the ſpirit of Chriſt. But who-

whosoever will fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavour to conform his life wholly to *the life of* Christ.

3. What will it avail thee to dispute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be void of humility, and art thereby displeasing to the Trinity? High words surely make a man neither holy nor just, but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God. I had rather feel Compunction, then understand the definition thereof. If thou didst know the whole Bible, and the sayings of all the Philosophers by heart, what would all that profit thee without the love of God and without grace? Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, but to love God, and to serve him onely. This is the highest wisdome, by contempt of the world to tend towards the kingdome of heaven.

4. It is therefore vanity to seek after perishing riches, and to trust in them. It is also vanity to hunt after honours, and to climbe to high

high degree. It is vanity to follow the desires of the flesh, and to labour for that, for which thou maist afterwards suffer more grievous punishment. Vanity it is to wish to live long, and to be careless to live well. It is vanity to mind onely this present life, and not to foresee those things which are to come. It is vanity to set thy love on that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither, where everlasting joy is permanent.

5. Call often to mind that proverb, *That the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* Endeavour therefore to withdraw thy heart from the love of visible things, and to turn thy self to the invisible. For they that follow their sensuality, do stain their own consciences, and lose the favour of God.

CHAP.

Chap. II.

Of the humble conceit of our selves.

ALl men naturally desire to know: but what availeth knowledge without the fear of God? Surely, an humble husbandman that serveth God, is better then a proud Philosopher that neglecting himself laboureth to understand the course of the heavens. Who so knoweth himself well, groweth more meane in his own conceit, & delighteth not in the praises of men. If I understood all things in the world, and were not in charity; what would that help me in the sight of God, who will judge me according to my deeds?

2. Cease from an inordinate desire of knowing, for therein is much distraction and deceit. The learned are willing to seem so to others, and to be accounted wise. There be many things, which to know doth little or nothing profit the soul: and he

he is very unwiſe, that is intent upon other things then thoſe that may avail him for the welfare of his ſoul. Many words do not ſatisfie the ſoul; but a good life comforteth the mind, and a pure conſcience giveth great aſſurance in the ſight of God.

3. How much the more thou knoweſt, and how much the better thou underſtandeſt, ſo much the more grievouſly ſhalt thou therefore be judged, unleſſe thy life be alſo more holy. Be not therefore extolled in thine own mind for any Art or Science *which thou knoweſt* but rather let the knowledge given thee make thee more humble and cautious. If thou thinkeſt that thou underſtandeſt and knoweſt much; know alſo that there be many things more which thou knoweſt not. Affect not to be over-wiſe, but rather acknowledge thine own ignorance. Why wilt thou preferre thy ſelf before others, ſith there be many more learned

learned and skilfull in the Scripture then thou? If thou wilt know or learn any thing profitablie; desire to be unknown, and to be little esteemed of *by man.*

4. The highest and most profitable reading is the true knowledge and consideration of our selves. It is great wisdome and perfection to esteem nothing of our selves, and to think alwayes well and highly of others. If thou shouldst see another openly sin, or commit some hainous offence, yet oughtest thou not to esteem the better of thy self: for thou knowest not how long thou shalt be able to remain in good estate. We are all frail, but thou oughtest to esteem none more frail then thy self.

CHAP. III.

Of the doctrine of Truth

HAppy is he whom Truth by it self doth teach, not by figures and words that passe away; but as

as it is in it self. Our own opinion and our own sense do often deceive us, and it discerns little. What availeth it to cavill *and dispute* about dark and hidden things; whereas for being ignorant of them we shall not be so much as reproved at the day of judgement? It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and necessary, and give our minds to that which is curious and hurtfull: we have eyes and see not.

2. And what have we to doe with *Genus* and *Species*, *the dry notions of Logicians*? He to whom the Eternall Word speaketh is delivered from a world of unnecessary conceptions. From that one Word are all things, and all speak that one: and this is the Beginning, which also speaketh unto us. No man without that *Word* understandeth or judgeth rightly. He to whom all things are one, he who reduceth all things to one, and seeth all things in one; may en-

joy a quiet mind, and remain peaceable in God. O God, who art the Truth, make me one with thee in everlasting charity. It is tedious to me often to reade and hear many things: in thee is all that I would have and can desire. Let all Doctours hold their peace; let all creatures be silent in thy sight: speak thou alone unto me,

3. How much the more one is united within himself, and becometh inwardly simple *and pure*, so much the more and higher things doth he understand without labour: for that he receiveth intellectuall light from above. A pure, sincere, and stable spirit is not distracted, *though it be imployed* in many works: for that it works all to the honour of God, and inwardly being still and quiet, seekes not it self in any thing it doth. Who hinders and troubles thee more then the unmortified affections of thine own heart? A good and godly man first of all dis-

diſpoſeth within himſelf thoſe things which he is outwardly to act: neither do they draw him to the deſires of an inordinate inclination, but he ordereth them according to the preſcript of right reaſon. Who hath a greater combat, then he that laboureth to overcome himſelf? This ought to be our endeavour, to conquer our ſelves, and daily to wax ſtronger and to make a further growth in holineſſe.

4. All perfection in this life hath ſome imperfection mixt with it: and no knowledge of ours is without ſome darkneſſe. An humble knowledge of thy ſelf is a ſurer way to God, then a deep ſearch after learning: yet learning is not to be blamed, nor the mere knowledge of any thing whatſoever is to be diſliked, it being good in it ſelf, and ordained by God; but a good conſcience and a virtuous life is alwayes to be preferred before it. But becauſe many endea-

vour rather to get knowledge, then to live well; therefore they are often deceived, and reap either none or very slender profit *of their labours*.

5. O, if men bestowed as much labour in the rooting out of vices, and planting of virtues, as they do in moving of questions! neither would there so much hurt be done, nor so great scandall be given in the world, nor so much looseneſſe be practiſed in religious houſes. Truly, at the day of judgement we ſhall not be examined what we have read, but what we have done: not how well we have ſpoken, but how religiouſly we have lived. Tell me now, where are all thoſe Doctours and Maſters with whom thou waſt well acquainted, whileſt they lived and flouriſhed in learning? Now others poſſeſſe their livings, and perhaps do ſcarce ever think of them. In their life time they ſeemed ſomething, but now they are not ſpoken of,

6. O,

6. O, how quickly doth the glory of the world passe away! O that their life had been answerable to their learning! then had their study and reading been to good purpose. How many perish in this world by reason of vain learning, who take little care of the serving of God? And because they rather choose to be great then humble, therefore they become vain in their imaginations. He is truly great that is great in charity. He is truly great, that is little in himself, and that maketh no account of any height of honour. He is truly wise, that accounteth all earthly things as dung, that he may gain Christ. And he is truly learned, that doeth the will of God, and forsaketh his own will.

Chap. IV.

Of wisdome and providence in our actions.

WE must not give eare to every saying or suggestiō, but ought warily and leisurely to ponder

things according to *the will of* God. But(alas) such is our weakneſſe that we rather often believe, and ſpeak evil of others then good. Thoſe that are perfect men do not eaſily give credit to every thing one tells them; for they know that humane frailty is prone to evil, and very ſubject to fail in words.

2. It is great wiſdome not to be raſh in thy proceedings, nor to ſtand ſtiffely in thine own conceits; as alſo not to believe every thing which thou heareſt; nor preſently to relate again to others, what thou haſt heard or doſt believe. Conſult with him that is wiſe, and conſcientious, and ſeek to be inſtructed by a better then thy ſelf, rather then to follow thine own inventions. A good life maketh a man wiſe according to God, and giveth him experience in many things. How much the humbler one is in himſelf, and more ſubject *and reſigned* unto God; ſo much

much the more prudent ſhall he be in all his affairs, and enjoy greater peace and quiet of heart.

CHAP. V.

Of the reading of holy Scriptures.

TRuth, not eloquence, is to be ſought for in holy Scripture. Each part of the Scripture is to be read with the ſame ſpirit where-with it was written. We ſhould rather ſearch after *our ſpirituall* profit in the Scriptures, then ſubtilty of ſpeech. We ought to read plain and devout books as willingly as high and profound. Let not the authority of the Writer offend thee, whether he be of great or ſmall learning; but let the love of pure truth draw thee to read. Search not who ſpake this or that but mark what is ſpoken.

2. Men paſſe away; but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. God ſpeaks unto us ſundry wayes, without reſpect of perſons. Our own curioſity often hindreth

us in in reading of the Scriptures, when as we will examine and discusse that which we should rather passe over without more ado. If thou desire to reap profit, reade humbly, plainly, and faithfully: never desire the estimation of learning: Inquire willingly, and hear with silence the words of holy men: dislike not the parables of the Elders, for they are not recounted without cause.

CHAP. VI.

Of inordinate affections.

WHensoever a man desireth any thing inordinately, he is presently disquieted in himself. The proud and covetous can never rest. The poor and humble in spirit live together in all peace. The man that is not yet perfectly dead in himself, is quickly tempted and overcome in small and trifling things. The weak in spirit, and he that is yet in a manner carnall and prone to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himself altogether from

from earthly desires. And therefore he is often afflicted, when he goeth about to withdraw himself from them: and easily falleth into indignation, when any opposition is made against him.

2. And if he hath followed therein his appetite, he is presently disquieted with remorse of conscience; for that he yielded to his passion which profiteth him nothing to the obtaining of the peace he sought for. True quietnesse of heart therefore is gotten by resisting our passions, not by obeying them. There is no peace in the heart of a carnall man, nor of him that is addicted to outward things, but in the spirituall and fervent man.

CHAP. VII.

Of flying vain hope and pride.

HE is vain that putteth his trust in men or creatures. Be not ashamed to serve others for the love of Iesus Christ; nor to be esteemed poor in this world. Presume

not upon thy self, but place thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will assist thy good affection. Trust not in thine own knowledge, nor in the subtilty of any living creature: but rather in the grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth those that are self-presuming.

2. Glory not in wealth if thou have it, nor in friends because potent, but in God who giveth all things, and above all desireth to give thee himself. Extoll not thy self for the bigness or beauty of thy body, which is dissolved and disfigured with a little sickness. Take not pleasure in thy naturall gifts or wit, lest thereby thou displease God, to whom appertaineth all the good whatsoever thou hast by nature.

3. Esteem not thy self better then others, lest perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man, thou be accounted worse then they. Be not proud of wel-

wel-doing: for the judgement of God is farre different from the judgement of men, and that often offendeth him which pleaseth them. If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others, that so thou maist conserve humility within thee. It is no prejudice unto thee to debase thy self under all men: but it is very prejudiciall to thee to preferre thy self before any one man. The humble enjoy continuall peace: but in the heart of the proud is envy and frequent indignation.

CHAP. VIII.

That too much familiarity is to be shunned.

LAy not thy heart open to every one; but treat of thy affaires with the wise and such as fear God. Converse not much with young people and strangers. Flatter not the rich; neither do thou ap-

appear willingly before great personages. Keep company with the humble and plain ones, with the devout, and virtuous; and conferre with them of those things that may edifie. Be not familiar with any woman; but in generall commend all good women to God. Desire to be familiar with God alone and his Angels, and fly the knowledge of men.

2. We must have charity towards all, but familiarity *with all* is not expedient. Sometimes it falleth out, that a person unknown to us, is much esteemed of, from the good report given him by others; whose presence notwithstanding is not gratefull to the eies of the beholders. We think sometimes to please others by our company, and we rather distaste them with those bad qualities which they discover in us.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of obedience and ſubjection.

IT is a great matter to live in obedience, to be under a ſuperiour, and not to be at our own diſpoſing. It is much ſafer to obey, then to govern. Many live under obedience, rather for neceſſity then for charity: ſuch are diſcontented, and do eaſily repine *and murmure.* Neither can they attain to freedome of mind, unleſſe they willingly and heartily put themſelves under obedience for the love of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou ſhalt find no reſt, but in humble ſubjection under the government of a Superiour. The imagination and change of places have deceived many.

2. True it is, that every one willingly doth that which agreeth with his own ſenſe *and liking*; and is apt to affect thoſe moſt that are of his own mind: But if God be amongſt us, we muſt ſometimes for peace ſake ceaſe to adhere to our

our own opinion. Who is so wise that he can fully know all things? Trust not therefore to thine own opinion; but be willing to hear the judgement of others. If that which thou thinkest be not amisse, and yet thou submittest it for God, and followest the opinion of another, it shall be better for thee.

3. I have often heard, that it is safer to hear and take counsel, then to give it. It may also fall out, that each ones opinion may be good: but to refuse to yield to others when as reason or cause requireth it, is a signe of pride and stiffnesse.

Chap. X.

Of the avoiding superfluity in words.

FLy the tumultuousnesse of the world as much as thou canst: for the talk of worldly affairs hindereth very much, although they be recounted with sincere intention; for we are quickly defiled, &

& enthralled with vanity. I could wish that I had oftentimes held my peace, when I have spoken; and that I had not been in company. Why do we so willingly speak and talk one with another, when notwithstanding we seldome return to silence without hurt of conscience? The cause why we so willingly talk, is for that by discoursing one with another, we seek to receive comfort one of another: and desire to ease our mind overwearied with sundry thoughts: and we very willingly talk and think of those things which we most love and desire; or of those which we feel most contrary and troublesome unto us.

2. But alas, oftentimes in vain, and to no end: for this outward comfort is the cause of no small losse of inward and divine consolation. Therefore we must watch and pray, lest our time passe away idlelie. If it be lawfull and expedient for thee to speak; speak those things

things that may edifie. An evil custome & neglect of our own good doth give too much libertie to inconsiderate speech: Yet religious discourses of spirituall things do greatly further our spiritual growth, especially where persons of one mind and spirit be gathered together in God.

CHAP. XI.

Of the obtaining of peace, and zealous desire of profiting in grace.

WE might enjoy much peace, if we would not busie our selves with the words and deeds of other men, which appertain nothing to our charge. How can he live long in peace, that thrusteth himself into the cares of others, that seeks occasions abroad, that little or seldome recollecteth himself within his own breast? Blessed are the single-hearted; for they shall enjoy much peace.

2. What is the reason, why some of the Saints were so perfect and contemplative? Because they laboured

boured to mortifie themſelves wholly to all earthly deſires: and therefore they could with their whole heart give themſelves to God, and be free for holy retirement. We are too much led by our own paſſions, and too ſolicitous for tranſitory things. We alſo ſeldome overcome any one vice perfectly, and are not inflamed with a fervent deſire to grow better every day: and therefore we remain cold and ſcarce warm in religion.

3. If we were perfectly dead unto our ſelves, and not entangled within our own breaſts; then ſhould we taſt divine things, and have ſome acquaintance with heavenly enjoyments. The greateſt & indeed the whole impediment is, for that we are not diſentangled from our paſſions and luſts, neither do we endeavour to enter into that path of perfection, which the Saints have walked before us: and when any ſmall adverſity befalleth us, we are too quickly dejected,

jected, and turn our selves to humane comforts.

4. If we would endeavour like men of courage to stand in the battel; surely we should feel the favourable assistance of God from heaven. For he who giveth us occasion to fight, to the end we may get the victory, is ready to succour those that fight *manfully*, and do trust in his grace. If we esteem our progresse in religious life to consist onely in some exteriour observances, our devotion will quickly be at an end. But let us lay the ax to the root, that being freed from passions; we may find rest to our souls.

5. If every year we would root out one vice, we should sooner become perfect men. But now oftentimes we perceive it goeth contrary, and that we were better and purer at the beginning of our conversion, then after many years of our profession. Our fervour and profiting should increase daily; but

but now it is accounted a great matter, if one can retain but some part of his first zeale. If we would but a little force our selves at the beginning, then should we be able to perform all things afterwards with ease and delight.

6. It is a hard matter to leave that to which we are accustomed, but harder to goe against our own wills. But if thou dost not overcome little and easie things, how wilt thou overcome harder things? Resist thy inclination in the very beginning, and unlearn evil customes, lest perhaps by little and little they draw thee to greater difficulty. O, if thou didst but consider how much inward peace unto thy self, and joy unto others thou shouldst procure by demeaning thy self well, I suppose thou wouldst be more carefull of thy spirituall profiting.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of the profit of adversity.

IT is good that we have sometimes some troubles and crosses: for they often make a man enter into himself, and consider that he is here in banishment, and ought not to place his trust in any worldly thing. It is good that we be sometimes contradicted; and that there be an evil or a lessening conceit had of us: and this, although we do and intend well. These things help often to the attaining of humility, and defend us from vain-glory: for then we chiefly seek God for our inward witnesse, when outwardly we be contemned by men, and when there is no credit given unto us.

2. And therefore a man should settle himself so fully in God, that he needed not to seek many comforts of men. When a good man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled with evil thoughts; then he understandeth

ſtandeth better the great need he hath of God, without whom he perceiveth he can do nothing that is good. Then alſo he ſorroweth, lamenteth, and prayeth by reaſon of the miſeries he ſuffereth. Then he is weary of living longer, and wiſheth that death would come, that he might be diſſolved and be with Chriſt. Then alſo he well perceiveth, that perfect ſecurity and full peace cannot be had in this world.

CHAP. XIII.

Of reſiſting temptations.

SO long as we live in this world we cannot be without tribulation and temptation; for as it is written in Iob, The life of man is a warfare upon earth. Every one therefore ought to be carefull about his temptations, & to watch in prayer, leſt the devil find an advantage to deceive him; who never ſleepeth, but goeth about ſeeking whom he may devour. No man

man is so perfect and holy, but hath sometimes temptations: and we cannot be altogether without them.

2. Temptations are often profitable to men, though they be troublesome & grievous: for in them man is humbled, purged, and instructed. All the Saints have passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations; and they that could not bear temptations, became reprobate and fell away. There is no order so holy, nor place so secret, where there be not temptations or adversities.

3. There is no man that is altogether free from temptations whilest he liveth on earth: for in our selves is the root thereof, being born with inclination to evil. When one temptation or tribulation goeth away, another cometh; and we shall ever have something to suffer, because we are fallen from the state of our felicity. Many seek to flie temptations, and do fall

fall more grievously into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome, but by patience and true humility we become stronger then all our enemies.

4. He that onely avoideth them outwardly, and doth not pluck them up by the roots, shall profit little: yea temptations will the sooner return unto him, and he shall feel himself in a worse case then before. By little and little, and by patience with longanimity (through Gods help) thou shalt more easily overcome, then with violence and thine own importunity. Often take counsel in temptations: and deal not roughly with him that is tempted; but give him comfort, as thou wouldst wish to be done to thy self.

5. The beginning of all evil temptations is inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a ship without a stern is tossed to and fro with the waves: so the man that is negligent, and leaveth

leaveth his purpose is many wayes tempted. Fire trieth iron, and temptation a just man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations do shew us what we are. We must be watchfull, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the doore of our hearts, but be resisted without the gate at his first knock. Wherefore one said, *Obsta principiis, &c.* Withstand the beginnings: for an after remedie comes often too late. First there cometh to the mind a bare cogitation of evill, then a strong imagination thereof, afterward delight and an evil motion, and then consent: and so by little and little our wicked enemy getteth entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginning. And how much the longer one is negligent in resisting, he becomes daily so much the weaker in himself, & the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some ſuffer greateſt temptations in the beginning of their converſion; others in the latter end; others again are much troubled almoſt through the whole time of their life. Some are but eaſily tempted, according to the wiſdome and equity of the divine appointment, which weigheth the ſtates and deſerts of men, and ordaineth all things for the welfare of his choſen ones.

7. We ought not therefore to deſpair when we are tempted, but ſo much the more fervently to pray unto God, that he will vouchſafe to help us in all tribulations; who ſurely, according to the words of S. Paul, will give with the temptation ſuch iſſue, that we may be able to beare it. Let us therefore humble our ſelves under the hand of God in all temptations and tribulations; for he will ſave and exalt the humble in ſpirit.

8. In temptations and afflictions man is proved how much he

hath profited; and his reward is thereby the greater, and his graces do more eminently shine forth. Neither is it any such great thing if a man be devout and fervent, when he feeleth no affliction: but if in time of adversity he bear himself patiently, there is hope then of great proficiency in grace. Some are kept from great temptations, and are often overcome in small ones which do daily occurre; to the end that being humbled, they may never presume on themselves in great matters, who are baffled in so small things.

Chap. XIV.

Of avoiding rash judgement.

TUrn thine eyes unto thy self, and beware thou judge not the deeds of other men. In judging of others a man laboureth in vain, often erreth, and easily sinneth; but in judging and discussing of himself, he alwaies laboureth fruitfully. We often judge of things according as we fancy them; for pri-

private affection bereaves us easily of true judgement. If God were alwaies the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so much troubled through the repugnance of our carnall mind.

2. But oftentimes something lurketh within, or else occurreth from without, which draweth us after it. Many secretly seek themselves in their actions, and know it not. They seem also to live in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will and opinion; but if things succeed otherwise then they desire, they are straight-waies troubled, and much afflicted. The diversities of judgements and opinions, cause oftentimes dissensions between religious and devout persons, between friends and countrymen.

3. An old custome is hardly broken, and no man is willing to be led further then himself can see. If thou dost more rely upon thine

own reason or industry, then upon that power which brings thee under the obedience of Iesus Christ, it will be long before thou become illuminated: for God will have us perfectly subject unto him, and that being enflamed with his love, we transcend the narrow limits of humane reason.

CHAP. XV.

Of works done of Charity.

FOr no wordly thing, nor for the love of any man, is any evil to be done: but yet for the profit of one that standeth in need, a good work is sometimes to be intermitted without any scruple, or changed also for a better. For by doing this, a good work is not lost, but changed into a better. The exterior work without charity profiteth nothing; but whatsoever is done of charity, be it never so little and contemptible in the sight of the world, it becomes wholly fruitfull. For God weigheth more with how much love one worketh, then how

much

much he doeth. He doeth much that loveth much.

2. He doeth much that doeth a thing well: he doeth well that rather serveth the community, then his own proper will. Oftentimes it seemeth to be charity, and it is rather carnality? because naturall inclination, self-will, hope of reward, and desire of our own interest will seldome be away.

3. He that hath true and perfect charity, seeketh himself in nothing; but onely desireth in all things that the glory of God should be exalted. He also envieth none; because he affecteth no private good: neither will he rejoyce in himself? but wisheth above all things to be made happy in the enjoyment of God. He attributeth nothing that is good to any man, but wholly referreth it unto God, from whom as from the fountain all things proceed; in whom finally all the Saints do rest as in their highest fruition. O, he that had

but one spark of true charity, would certainly discern that all earthly things be full of vanity.

CHAP. XVI.

Of bearing with the defects of others.

THose things that a man cannot amend in himself or in others, he ought to suffer patiently, untill God order things otherwise. Think that perhaps it is better so for thy triall and patience, without which all our good deeds are not much to be esteemed. Thou oughtest to pray notwithstanding, when thou hast such impediments, that God would vouchsafe to help thee, and that thou mayest bear them patiently.

2. If one that is once or twice warned will not give over, contend not with him: but commit all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his name honoured in all his servants, who well knoweth how to turn evil into good. Endeavour to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others,

others, of what sort soever they be; for that thy self also hast many things which must be suffered by others. If thou canst not make thy self such an one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking? We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we amend not our own faults.

3. We will have others severely corrected, and will not be corrected our selves. The large liberty of others displeaseth us: and yet we will not have our desires denied us. We will have others kept under by strict laws; but in no sort will our selves be restrained. And thus it appeareth, how seldome we weigh our neighbour in the same ballance with our selves. If all men were perfect, what should we have to suffer of our neighbour for God?

4. But now God hath thus ordered it, that we may learn to bear one anothers burden: for no man is without fault, no man but hath his

burden, no man sufficient of himself, no man wise enough of himself; but we ought to bear with one another, comfort one another, help, instruct, and admonish one another. Occasions of adversity best discover how great virtue or strength each one hath: for occasions make not a man frail, but do shew what he is.

CHAP. XVII.

Of a retired life.

THou must learn to break thy own will in many things, if thou wilt have peace and concord with others. It is no small matter to dwell in a religious community, and to converse therein without complaint, and to persevere therein faithfully untill death. Blessed is he that hath there lived well, and ended happily. If thou wilt persevere in grace as thou oughtest, and profit in virtue, esteem thy self as a banished man, and a pilgrim upon earth. Thou must be contented for Christs sake to be esteemed as a fool

fool in this world, if thou desire to lead an holy life.

2. The wearing of a religious habit, and shaving of the crown, do little profit; but change of manners, and perfect mortification of passions make a true religious man. He that seeketh any thing else but God, and the salvation of his soul, shall find nothing but tribulation and sorrow. Neither can he remain long in peace, that laboureth not to be the least, and subject to all.

3. Thou camest to serve, not to rule. Know that thou wast called to suffer and to labour, not to be idle, or to spend thy time in talk. Here therefore men are proved as gold in the fornace. Here no man can stand, unless he humble himself with his whole heart for the love of God.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the examples of the holy Fathers.

CONsider the lively examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection and religion shined; and thou shalt see how little it is, and almost nothing, which we do now in these dayes. Alas, what is our life if it be compared to them! The Saints and friends of Christ served the Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in labour and weariness, in watchings and fastings, in prayer and holy meditations, in persecutions and many reproaches.

2. O how many and grievous tribulations suffered the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessours, Virgins, and all the rest that endeavoured to follow the steps of Christ! They hated their lives in this world, that they might possesse their souls in everlasting life. O how strict and self-renouncing a life led those holy Fathers in the wilderness! How long and grievous tentations suffered

red they! How often were they assaulted by the enemy! What frequent and fervent prayers offered they to God! How rigorous an abstinence did they daily use! How great zeal and care had they of their spirituall proficiency! How strong a combat had they for the overcoming of their lusts! How pure and upright intention kept they unto God! In the day they laboured and in the night they attended to continuall prayer; although when they laboured also they ceased not fro mental prayer.

3. They spent all their time with profit: every hour seemed short for the service of God: and by reason of the great sweetness they felt in contemplation, they forgot the necessity of corporall refreshments. They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends and kinsfolk; they desired to have nothing which appertained to the world; they scarce took things necessary for the sustenance of life; they grieved

to

to serve their bodies even in necessity. They were poor in earthly things, but very rich in grace and virtues. Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly they were refreshed with grace and divine consolation.

4. They were strangers to the world, but near & familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing, and despicable to this present world: but they were precious and beloved in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, lived in simple obedience, walked in love and patience: and therefore they profited daily in spirit, and obtained great grace in Gods sight. They were given for an example to all religious men; and they should more provoke us to endeavour after spirituall proficiencies, then the number of the lukewarm livers should prevail to make us remisse.

5. O how great was the fervour of all religious persons in the begin-

gining of their holy institution! How great was their devotion to prayer! What ambition to excell others in virtue! How exact discipline then flourished! How great reverence and obedience, under the rule of their Superiours, observed they in all things! Their footsteps yet remaining do testifie that they were indeed holy and perfect men; who fighting so valiantly trode the world under their feet. Now he is greatly accounted of, that transgresseth not, and that can with patience endure that which he hath undertaken.

6. O the coldnesse and negligence of our time! that we so quickly decline from our first fervour, and are come to that passe, that very sloth and coldnesse of spirit maketh our own life tedious unto us. Would to God the desire to profit in virtue did not wholly sleep in thee, who hast often seen the many examples of devout and religious persons.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the exercise of a good and religious person.

THe life of a good and religious person ought to be adorned with all virtues: that he may inwardly be such as outwardly he seemeth to men. And with reason thou oughtest to be much more within, then is perceived without: for God beholdeth us, whom we ought most highly to reverence wheresoever we are, and walk in purity like Angels in his sight. Daily should we renew our purposes, and stirre up our selves to fervour, as though this were the first day of our conversion; and to say, Help me my God in this my good purpose, and in thy holy service; and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly: for that which I have done hitherto is nothing.

2. According to our purpose shall be the successe of our spiritual profiting; and much diligence is

is neceſſary to him that will profit much. And if he that firmly purpoſeth often faileth, what ſhall he do that ſeldome purpoſeth any thing, or with little reſolvedneſſe? It may fall out ſundry wayes that we leave off our purpoſe: and the light omiſſion of *ſpiritual* exerciſes ſeldome paſſes without ſome loſſe *to our ſouls.* The purpoſe of juſt men depends upon Gods grace, & not upon their own wiſdome; upon whom they alwayes rely for whatſoever they take in hand. For man doth purpoſe, but God doth diſpoſe: neither is the way of man in himſelf.

3. If an accuſtomed exerciſe be ſometimes omitted, either for ſome act of piety, or profit to my brother; it may eaſily afterwards be recovered again. But if out of a ſlothfull mind, or out of careleſneſſe we lightly forſake the ſame, it is a great offence againſt God, and will be found to be prejudiciall to our ſelves. Let us do the beſt

best we can, we shall easily fail in many things; yet must we alwayes purpose some certain course, and especially against those vices which do most of all molest us. We must diligently search into, and set in order both the outward and the inward man, because both of them are expedient to our coming forward in godlinesse.

4. If thou canst not continually recollect thy self, yet do it sometimes, at the least once a day, to wit, at morning or at night. In the morning fix thy good purpose; and at night examine thy self what thou hast done, how thou hast behaved thy self in thought, word, and deed; for in these perhaps thou hast often offended both God and thy neighbour. Gird thy loyns like a man against the vile assaults of the devil; bridle thy riotous appetite, and thou shalt be the better able to keep under all the unruly motions of the flesh. Be thou at no time idle altogether, but either reading,

reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or endeavouring ſomething for the publick good. As for bodily exerciſes they muſt be uſed with great diſcretion, neither are they to be practiſed of all men alike.

5. The exerciſes that are not common are not to be expoſed to publick view; for things private are practiſed more ſafely at home. Nevertheleſſe thou muſt beware thou neglect not that which is common, and be more ready for what is private. But having fully and faithfully accompliſhed all thou art bound and enjoyned to do, if thou haſt any ſpare time, betake thee to thy ſelf, as thy devotion ſhall require. All cannot uſe one kind of exerciſe, but one is more convenient for this perſon, another for that; according to the ſeaſonableneſſe of times alſo divers exerciſes are fitting. Some ſute better with us on working-dayes, other on holy-dayes: ſome we have

have need of in the time of temptation, and of others in time of peace and quietneſſe. Some we mind when we are penſive, and other ſome when we rejoice in the Lord.

6. When chief feſtivalls draw near, good exerciſes are to be renewed, and the prayers of holy men more fervently to be implored. From feaſt to feaſt we ſhould make ſome good purpoſe, as though we were then to depart out of this world, and to come to the everlaſting feaſt *in heaven*. Therefore ought we carefully to prepare our ſelves at holy times, and to live more devoutly, and to keep more exactly all things that we are to obſerve, as though we were ſhortly at Gods hands to receive the reward of our labours.

7. But if it be deferred, let us think with our ſelves that we are not ſufficiently prepared, and unworthy yet of ſo great glory which ſhall be revealed in us in due time; and let us endeavour to prepare our

our ſelves better for our departure. *Bleſſed is that ſervant* (ſaith S. Luke the Evangeliſt) *whom when his Lord cometh he ſhall find watching; Verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall make him ruler over all his goods.*

CHAP. XX.

Of the love of ſolitude and ſilence.

SEek a convenient time to retire into thy ſelf, and meditate often upon Gods benefits. Meddle not with curioſities; but reade ſuch things which may rather yield compunction to thy heart, then buſy thy head. If thou wilt withdraw thy ſelf from ſpeaking vainly and from gadding idlely, as alſo from hearkening after novelties & rumours, thou ſhalt find leiſure ſufficient and convenient enough to meditate on good things. The greateſt Saints avoided the ſociety of men when they could conveniently, and did rather chooſe to ſerve God, and to live to God, in ſecret.

2. One ſaid, As oft as I have been

been among men, I returned home leſſe a man then I was before: and this we find true, when we talk long together. It is eaſier not to ſpeak a word at all, then not to ſpeak more words then we ſhould: It is eaſier for a man to keep home, then to keep himſelf well when he is abroad. He therefore that intends to attain to the more inward and ſpirituall things of Religion, muſt with Ieſus depart from the multitude and preſſe of people. No man ſafely doth go abroad, but he which gladly can abide at home: no man ſpeaks ſecurely, but he that holds his peace willingly. No man ruleth ſafely, but he that is ruled willingly: no man ſecurely doth command, but he that hath learned readily to obey.

3. No man rejoyceth ſecurely, unleſſe he hath within him the teſtimony of a good conſcience; and yet the ſecurity of the Saints was alwayes full of the fear of God. Neither were they leſſe careful and humble

humble in themſelves, for that they ſhined outwardly with grace & great virtues. But the ſecurity of the wicked riſeth out of pride and preſumption, and in the end it deceiveth them. Although thou ſeem to be a good religious man, or a devout Hermite, yet promiſe not thy ſelf ſecurity in this life.

4. Oftentimes thoſe have fallen into greateſt danger by over much ſelf-confidence, who have been in greateſt eſteem & account amongſt men. Wherefore it is more profitable to many not to be altogether free from temptations, but to be often aſſaulted, leſt they ſhould be too ſecure, & ſo perhaps be puffed up with pride; or too freely give themſelves to worldly comforts. O how good a conſcience ſhould he keep, that would never ſeek after tranſitory joy, nor entangle himſelf with the things of this world! O how great peace and quietneſſe ſhould he poſſeſſe, that would cut off all vain ſollicitude, and think onely

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the world, as it is written, In your hav
chambers be ye grieved. In thy neg
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of tears wherein ſhe may every ſ
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night wash & cleanse her self; that she may be so much the more familiar with her Creatour, by how much the further off she liveth from all worldly disquiet. Who so therefore withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friends, God with his holy Angels will draw near unto him. It is better for a man to live privately and to have regard to himself, then to neglect his soul, though he could work wonders in the world. It is very commendable in a religious person, seldome to go abroad, and to be unwilling to see others.

7. Why art thou desirous to see that which is unlawfull for thee to enjoy? for the world passeth away and the lust thereof. Our sensuall desires draw us to rove abroad; but when the time is past, what carriest thou home with thee but a burdened conscience & distracted heart? A merry going out bringeth commonly a mournfull return home; and a joyfull evening

ning makes *many times* a sad morn ing. So all carnal joy enters gently but in the end it bites and stings to death. What canst thou see elsewhere, which thou canst not see here? behold the Heaven and the Earth and all the Elements; for of these are all things created.

8. What canst thou see any where that can long continue under the sun? Thou thinkest perchance to satiate thy self, but thou canst never attain it. Shouldst thou see all things present before thine eyes, what were it but a vain *and unprofitable* sight? Lift up thine eyes to God in the highest, and pray him to pardon all thy sinnes and negligencies. Leave vain things to the vain, but be thou intent upon those things which God commandeth thee. Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto thee Iesus thy Beloved. Stay with him in thy closet; for thou shalt not find so great peace anywhere else. Hadst thou not gone abroad & hearken-

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ed to idle rumours, thou mighteſt the better have enjoyed quietneſs. But ſith thou delighteſt ſometimes to hear novelties, it is fit thou ſuffer for it ſome unquietneſſe of mind.

CHAP. XXI.

Of compunction of heart.

IF thou wilt make any progreſſe in godlineſſe, keep thy ſelf in the fear of God, & affect not too much libertie. Keep in aw all thy ſenſes under *the ſevere rod of* diſcipline, & give not thy ſelf over to fooliſh mirth. Give thy ſelf to compunction of heart, and thou ſhalt gain much devotion thereby: compunction bringeth much good, which diſſoluteneſſe is wont quickly to deſtroy. It is a wonder that any man can ever perfectly rejoyce in this life, if he duly conſider his baniſhment, & throughly weigh the many perils wherewith his ſoul is invironed.

2. The levity of our minds and the little care we have of our

faults, maketh us insensible of the sorrows of our souls; but oftentimes we vainly laugh, when we have just cause to weep. There is no true liberty nor right gladnesse, but in the fear of God accompanied with à good conscience. Happy is he that can avoid all distracting impediments, and bring himself to the union of holy compunction. Happy is he that can abandon all that may defile or burthen his conscience. Resist manfully: one custome overcometh another. If thou canst let others alone in their matters, they likewise shall not hinder thee in thine.

3. Busie not thy self in matters which appertain to others; neither do thou trouble thy self with the affairs of thy betters. Still have an eye to thy self first, and be sure more especially to instruct thy self, before all thy loving friends. If thou hast not the favour of men, be not grieved at it; but

but take this to heart, that thou doſt not carry thy ſelf ſo warily & circumſpectly as it becometh the ſervant of God, and a devout religious man. It is better oftentimes and ſafer that a man hath not many conſolations in this life, eſpecially ſuch as are agreeable to the fleſh. But that we have not at all or do very ſeldome taſte divine conſolations, the fault is ours, becauſe we ſeek not after compunction of heart, nor do altogether forſake the vain and outward comforts *of this world.*

4. Know that thou art unworthy of divine conſolation, and that thou haſt rather deſerved much tribulation. When a man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole world grievous and bitter unto him. A good man findeth alwayes ſufficient cauſe of mourning and weeping: for whether he conſider his own or his neighbours eſtate, he knoweth that none liveth here without tri-

bulation. And by how much a man looks narrowly into himself, by so much the more he sorroweth. Our sins and wickednesses wherein we are so enwrapt, that we can seldome apply our selves to heavenly contemplations, do minister unto us matter of most just sorrow and inward compunction.

5. Didst thou oftener think of thy death, then of thy living long, there is no question but thou wouldst be more carefull to amend. I believe thou wouldst willingly undergo any labour or sorrow in this world, and not be afraid of the greatest austerity, if thou didst consider within thy self the infernall paines in the other world. But because these things enter not to the heart, and we still love those things onely that delight us, therefore it is we remain very dull and cold in religion.

6. It is often our want of spirit which maketh our miserable body so

ſo eaſily complain. Pray therefore unto the Lord with all humility, that he will vouchſafe to give thee the ſpirit of compunction. And ſay with the Prophet, *Pſal.* 80. *Feed, me, O Lord, with the bread of tears, and give me plenteouſneſſe of tears to drink.*

CHAP. XXII.

Of the Conſideration of humane miſery.

MIſerable thou art whereſoever thou be, or whitherſoever thou turneſt, unleſſe thou turn thy ſelf unto God. Why art thou troubled when things ſucceed not as thou wouldeſt or deſireſt? for who is he that hath all things according to his mind? Neither I nor thou, nor any man upon earth; there is none in this world, be he King or Pope, without ſome tribulation or other. Who is then in the beſt caſe *or condition*? even he who can ſuffer ſomething for God.

2. Many weak and infirm ones

can say, Behold what an happy life hath such an one, how wealthy, how great he is, in how great power and dignity! But lift up thine eyes to the riches of heaven, and thou shalt see that all the goods of this life are nothing so to be accounted of. They are very uncertain, rather burdensome then otherwise, because they are never enjoyed without carefulnesse and fear. Mans happinesse consisteth not in having abundance of wealth, but a mean estate should content him; it is truly misery enough even to live upon the earth. The more a man would be spirituall, the more bitter to him is this present life; because he seeth more clearly and perceiveth more sensibly the defects of humane corruption. For to eat and to drink, to sleep and to watch, to labour and to rest, and to be subject to other necessities of nature, is doubtlesse a great misery and affliction to a religious man, that would

would gladly be free and delivered from all sin.

3. For the inward man is much oppressed with these *outward and* corporall necessities whilest we live in this world. Therefore the holy Prophet prayeth with great devotion to be delivered from them, saying, *Bring me, O Lord, out of my necessities.* But wo be to them that know not their own misery: & a greater wo to them that love this miserable & corruptible life. And some there be so much dote upon it, that although with great labour and pains they can scarce get mere necessaries, yet could they live here alwayes, they would care nothing at all for the kingdome of heaven.

4. O how foolish are these and faithlesse in their hearts, who lie so deeply sunk in the earth, that they can mind or relish nothing but carnall things. But miserable wretches as they are, they shall in the end feel to their cost how vile

and how nothing that was which they loved: Whereas the Saints of God, and all the devout friends of Christ respected not those things which pleased the flesh, and which flourished in this life, but longed for the everlasting riches with their whole hope and desire. Their whole desire was carried upward to things durable and invisible, that the desire of things visible might not draw them to things below. O brother, lose not thy hope of coming forward in godlinesse; there is yet time, the hour is not yet past.

5. Why wilt thou deferre thy good purpose from day to day? Arise and begin in this very instant, and say, Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be striving, now is the best time to amend my self. When thou art ill at ease and much troubled, then is the time of deserving best; thou must passe through fire and water before thou comest to the place of.

of refreshing. Unlesse thou dost earnestly force thy self, thou shalt never get the victory over sin: so long as we carry about us this frail body of ours, we can never be without sin, or live without trouble and sorrow. We would gladly be quiet & freed from all misery, but seeing by sin we have lost our innocency, we have together with that lost also the true felicity. Therefore it becomes us to have patience, and to wait for the mercy of God, till this our iniquity be put away, and this mortality of ours be swallowed up of life.

6. O how great is humane frailty, which is alwayes prone to evill! to day thou confessest thy sins, and to morrow thou committest the very same thou hast confessed. Now thou art purposed to look well unto thy wayes, & within a while thou so behavest thy self, as though thou hadst never any such purpose at all. Good cause have we therefore to hum-

ble our selves, and never to have any great conceit of our selves, because we are so frail and so inconstant. Besides, that may quickly be lost by our own negligence, which by the grace of God and our own great pains we have scarce at length obtained.

7. What will become of us in the end, who begin to wax cold so timely? Wo be unto us, if we will so give our selves unto ease, as if all were in peace and safety, when as yet there appeareth no signe of true holinesse in our conversations! We have need like young beginners to be newly instructed again to good life, if happily there be any hope of our future amendment and proficiency in spirituall things.

Chap. XXIII.

Of the meditation of Death.

THere will very quickly be an end of thee here, therefore see what will become of thee hereafter. To day a man, to morrow none

none; and out of sight, out of mind. O the stupidity and hardnesse of mans heart, who thinketh only upon the present, and hath no more care of what is to come! Thou shouldest so order thy self in all thy thoughts and actions, as if to day, yea this very moment, thou wert ready to depart. Hadst thou a clear conscience, thou wouldst not greatly fear death. It were better to avoid sin, then to fly death. If thou art not prepared to day, how wilt thou be prepared to morrow? To morrow is uncertain, & how knowest thou that thou shalt live till to morrow?

2. What availeth it to live long, when we are so little the better *by long living*? Alas! length of dayes doth oftner make our sins the greater, then our lives the better. O that we had spent but one day well in this world! Many there are who count how long it is since their conversion; and yet full slen-

ler oftentimes is the fruit of amendment of life. If to die be accounted dreadfull, to live long may perhaps prove more dangerpus. Happy is he that alwayes hath the hour of his death before his eyes, and daily prepareth himself for to die. If at any time thou haſt ſeen another man die, make account thou muſt alſo paſſe the ſame way.

3. When it is morning, think thou mayeſt die before night; & when evening comes, dare not to promiſe thy ſelf the next morning. Be thou therefore alwayes in a readineſſe, and ſo lead thy life that death may never take thee unprepared. Many die ſuddenly and when they look not for it: for the Son of man will come when we think not of his coming. When that laſt hour ſhall come, thou wilt begin to have a farre different opinion of thy whole life that is paſt, and be exceeding ſorry thou haſt been ſo careleſſe & remiſſe.

4. O

4. O how wise and happy is he that now laboureth to be such an one in his life, as he wisheth to be found at the hour of his death! A perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire to go forward in vertue, the love of discipline, the painfulnesse of repentance, the readinesse of obedience, the denying of our selves, and the bearing any affliction for the love of Christ patiently, will give us great confidence we shall die happily. Whilst thou art in health thou mayst do much good, but when thou art sick, I see not what thou art able to do. Few by sickness grow better and more reformed; as also they who wander much abroad, seldome thereby become holy.

5. Trust not to friends and kindred, neither do thou put off the care of thy souls welfare till hereafter; for men will sooner forget thee, then thou art aware of. It is better to look to it betime,

time, and do some good beforehand, then to trust to other mens courtesies. If thou beest not carefull for thy self now, who will be carefull for thee hereafter? The time that is now present is very pretious, now are the dayes of salvation, now is the acceptable time. But alas! that thou shouldst spend thy time so idlely here, where thou mightst purchase to live eternally hereafter. The time will come when thou shalt desire one day or hour to amend in, and I cannot say that it will be granted thee.

6. O beloved, from how great danger mightst thou deliver thy self! from how great fear free thy self, if thou wouldst be alwayes mindfull of death! Labour now to live so, that at the hour of death thou mayst rather rejoyce then fear: learn now to die to the world, that thou mayst then begin to live with Christ. Learn now to contemne all *earthly* things, that thou

thou mayst freely go to Christ. Chastise thy body now by repentance, that thou mayst then have assured confidence.

7. Ah fool, why dost thou think to live long, when thou canst not promise to thy self one day? How many have been deceived and suddenly snatcht away? How often dost thou hear these reports, Such a man is slain, another man is drowned, a third breaks his neck with a fall from some high place, this man died eating, and that man playing? One perished by fire, another by the sword, another of the plague, another was slain by thieves. Thus death is the end of all, and mans life suddenly passeth away like a shaddow.

8. Who shall remember thee when thou art dead? Do, do now, my beloved, whatsoever thou art able to do: for thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor yet what shall befall thee after thy death.

Now

Now whilst thou hast time heap unto thy self everlasting riches, think on nothing but the salvation of thy soul, care for nothing but the things of God. Make now friends to thy self by honouring the Saints of God, and imitating their actions, that when thou faileſt in this short life, they may receive thee into everlasting habitations.

9. Keep thy self as a stranger and pilgrim upon the earth, and as one to whom the affairs of this world do nothing appertain. Keep thy heart free, and lifted up to God, because thou hast here no abiding city. Send thither thy daily prayers and sighs together with thy tears, that after death thy spirit may with much happinesse passe to the Lord. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of Iudgement, and the punishment of Sins.

IN all things have a ſpeciall aim to thy end, and how thou wilt be able to ſtand before that ſevere Iudge to whom nothing is hid, who is not pacified with gifts, nor admitteth any excuſes, but will judge according to right and equity. O wretched and fooliſh ſinner, who ſometimes feareſt the countenance of an angry man, what anſwer wilt thou make to God who knoweth all thy wickedneſſe? Why doſt thou not provide for thy ſelf againſt that great day of judgement, when no man can excuſe or anſwer for another, but every one ſhall have enough to anſwer for himſelf? Now are thy pains profitable, thy tears acceptable, thy groans audible, thy grief pacifieth God, and purgeth thy ſoul.

2. The patient man hath a great and wholeſome purgatory, who

who though he receive injuries, yet grieveth more for the malice of another then for his own wrongs: who prayeth willingly for his adversaries, and from his heart forgiveth their offences: he delayeth not to ask forgiveneſſe of whomſoever he hath offended; he is ſooner moved to compaſſion then to anger; he often offereth *an holy* violence to himſelf, and laboureth to bring the body wholly into ſubjection to the ſpirit. It is better to purge out our ſins, and cut off our vices here, then to keep them to be puniſhed hereafter. Verily we do but deceive our ſelves through an inordinate love of the fleſh.

3. What is it that that infernall fire feeds upon, but thy ſins? The more thou ſpareſt thy ſelf now and followeſt the fleſh, ſo much the more hereafter ſhall be thy puniſhment, and thou ſtoreſt up greater fewell for that flame. In what thing a man hath ſinned, in the

the ſame ſhall he be the more grievouſly puniſhed. There ſhall the ſlothfull be pricked forward with burning goads, and the gluttons be tormented with great hunger and thirſt. There ſhall the luxurious and lovers of pleaſures be bathed in burning pitch and ſtinking brimſtone, and the envious like mad dogs ſhall howl for very grief.

4. There is no ſin but ſhall have its proper torment. There the proud ſhall be filled with all confuſion: the covetous ſhall be pinched with miſerable penury: one hour of pain there ſhall be more bitter then a thouſand years of the ſharpeſt pennance here. There is no quiet, no comfort for the damned there: yet here we have ſome intermiſſion of our labours, and enjoy the comfort of our freinds. Be now ſollicitous and ſorrowfull becauſe of thy ſins, that at the day of judgement thou mayſt be ſecure with the company

ny of blessed souls. For then shall the righteous with great boldnesse stand against such as have vexed and oppressed them; then shall he stand to judge men, who doth now humbly submit himself to the censures of men. Then shall the poor and humble have great confidence, but the proud man shall be compassed with fear on every side.

5. Then will it appear that he was wise in this world, who had learned for Christ to be a fool and despised. Then shall every affliction patiently undergone delight us, when the mouth of iniquity shall be stopped up. Then shall the devout rejoyce, and the profane shall mourn. Then shall he more rejoyce that hath beat down his own flesh, then he that hath abounded in all pleasure and delight. Then shall the poor attire shine gloriously, and the precious robes seem vile and contemptible. Then shall be more commen-

mended the poor cottage, then the guilded pallace. Then will conſtant patience more avail us, then all earthly power. Then ſimple obedience ſhall be preferred before all worldly wiſdome.

6. Then ſhall a good and clear conſcience more rejoyce a man then the profound *learning of* philoſophy. Then ſhall the contempt of riches weigh more then all the worldlings treaſure. Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou haſt prayed devoutly, then that thou haſt fared daintily. Then wilt thou be more glad thou haſt kept ſilence, then that thou haſt talked much. Then will good works avail more then many goodly words. Then a ſtrict life and ſevere repentance will be more pleaſing then all earthly delights. Accuſtome thy ſelf now to ſuffer a little, that thou mayeſt then be delivered from more grievous pains. Prove firſt here what thou canſt endure hereafter. If now thou canſt

canst endure so little, how wilt thou then be able to endure perpetuall torments? if now a little suffering make thee so impatient, what will hell fire do hereafter? Assure thy self thou canst not have two Paradises: it is impossible to enjoy delights in this world, and after that to reign with Christ.

7. Suppose thou hast hitherto lived alwayes in honours and delights, what would all this avail thee if thou wert to die at this instant? All therefore is vanity, but to love God and serve him only. For he that loveth God with all his heart, is neither afraid of death nor punishment, nor of judgement, nor of hell: for perfect love gives secure access to God. But he that takes delight in sin, what marvel is it if he be afraid, both of death and judgement? Yet it is good, although love be not yet of force to withhold thee from sin, that at least the fear of hell should restrain thee. But he that layeth aside

aside the fear of God, can never continue long in good estate, but falleth quickly into the snares of the devil.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the zealous amendment of our whole life.

BE watchfull and diligent in the service of God, and often bethink thy self wherefore thou camest hither, and why thou hast left the world. Was it not that thou mightst live to God, and become a spirituall man? Be fervent then to come forward for shortly thou shalt receive a reward of thy labours; there shall not be then any fear or sorrow in thy coasts. Labour but now a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea perpetuall joy *to thy soul*. If thou continuest faithfull and fervent in doing *good*, no doubt but God will be faithfull and liberall in rewarding thee. Thou oughtst to have a good hope for getting the victory; but thou must not be secure, lest thou wax

wax either negligent or proud.

2. When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once, being oppressed with grief, humbly prostrate himself in a Church in prayer, and said within himself, *O, if I knew that I should yet persevere!* he presently heard within him an answer from God, which said, *What if thou didst know it, what wouldst thou do? Do now what thou wouldst do then, and thou shalt be secure.* And being herewith comforted and strengthened, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noysome anxiety ceased: neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what should befall him; but rather laboured to understand what was the perfect and acceptable will of God, for the beginning and accomplishing of every good work.

3. Hope in the Lord, and doe good, saith the Prophet, and inha-

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bit the land, and thou ſhalt be fed in the riches thereof. One thing there is that draweth many back from a ſpirituall progreſſe, and the diligent amendment of their lives: *viz.* the horrour of the difficulty, or the labour of the combat. But they above others improve moſt in virtue, that endeavour moſt to overcome thoſe things which are grievous and contrary unto them. For there a man improveth more, & obtaineth greater grace, where he more overcometh himſelf and mortifieth himſelf in ſpirit.

4. But all men have not alike to overcome and mortifie: yet he that is zealous, and diligent, though he have more paſſions, ſhall profit more in virtue then another that is of a more temperate diſpoſition, if he be leſſe fervent in the purſuit of virtue. Two things eſpecially much further our amendment, to wit, to withdraw our ſelves violently from that to which nature is viciouſly

inclined, and to labour earneſtly for that virtue which we moſt want. Be carefull alſo to avoid with great diligence thoſe things in thy ſelf, which do commonly diſpleaſe thee in others.

5. Gather ſome profit to thy ſoul whereſoever thou be; ſo as if thou ſeeſt or heareſt of any good examples, ſtirre up thy ſelf to the imitation thereof. But if thou ſeeſt any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou do not the ſame. And if at any time thou haſt done it, labour quickly to amend it. As thine eye obſerveth others, ſo art thou alſo noted again by others. O how ſweet and pleaſant a thing it is, to ſee the ſervants of Chriſt fervent and devout, endued with virtuous and decent manners! And on the contrary, How pittyfull & grievous a thing it is, to ſee them that live in a diſſolute and diſordered ſort, not applying themſeves to that for which they were called! O how hurtfull a thing it is, to neglect

neglect the good purposes of their vocation, & to busie themselves in that which is not committed to their care!

6. Be mindfull of the profession thou hast made, and have alwayes before the eyes of thy soul the remembrance of thy Saviour crucified. Thou hast good cause to be ashamed looking upon the life of Iesus Christ, seeing thou hast as yet no more endeavoured to conform thy self unto him, though thou hast walked a long time in the way of God. A religious person that exerciseth himself seriously, and devoutly in the most holy life and passion of our Lord, shall there abundantly find whatsoever is necessary & profitable for him; neither shall he need to seek any better thing, out of Iesus. O, if Iesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly & fully should we be instructed *in all truth.*

7. A fervent religious person taketh & beareth all well that is cõ-

manded him: but he that is negligent and cold, hath tribulation upon tribulation, & on all sides is afflicted: for he is void of inward consolation, & is forbidden to seek externall comforts. A religious person that liveth not according to discipline, lies open to great mischief to the ruin of his soul. He that seeketh liberty and ease, shall ever live in disquiet: for one thing or other will displease him.

8. O that we had nothing else to do, but alwayes with our mouth & whole heart to praise our Lord God! O that thou mightst never have need to eat, nor drink, nor sleep; but mightst alwayes praise God, and onely employ thy self in spirituall exercises: thou shouldst then be much more happy then now thou art, when for so many necessities thou art constrained to serve thy body. Would God these necessities were not at all, but onely the spiritull refections of the soul, which, alas, we taste of too seldome.

9. When

9. When a man cometh to that eſtate, that he ſeeketh not his comfort from any creature, then doth he begin perfectly to reliſh God. Then ſhall he be contented with whatſoever doth befall him in this world. Then ſhall he neither rejoyce in great matters, nor be ſorrowfull for ſmall, but entirely and confidently commit himſelf to God, who ſhall be unto him all in all; to whom nothing doth periſh, nor die, but all things do live unto him, and ſerve him at a beck without delay.

10. Remember alwayes thy end, and how that time loſt never returns. Without care and diligence thou ſhalt never get virtue. If thou beginneſt to wax cold, it will be evill with thee; but if thou give thy ſelf to fervour *of ſpirit*, thou ſhalt find much peace, and feel leſſe labour, through the aſſiſtance of Gods grace, and love of virtue. The fervent and diligent man is prepared for all things. It is harder

to resist vices and passions, then to toil in bodily labours. He that avoideth not small faults, by little & little falleth into greater. Thou wilt alwayes rejoyce in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably. Be watchfull over thy self, stir up thy self, warn thy self, and whatsoever becomes of others neglect not thy self. The more *holy* violence thou usest against thy self the more shall be thy *spiritual* profiting, *Amen.*

THE SECOND BOOK

CHAP. I.

Of the inward life.

THE *Kingdome of God is within you*, saith the Lord. Turn thee with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forsake this wretched world, and thy soul shall find rest. Learn to despise exteriour things, & to give thy self to the interiour, and

and thou shalt perceive the kingdome of God to come into thee. *For the kingdome of God is peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*, which is not given to the wicked. Christ will come into thee, and shew thee his consolations, if thou prepare for him a worthy mansion within thee. All his glory and beauty is within, & there he pleaseth himself. The inward man he often visits; & hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant solace, much peace, wonderfull familiarity.

2. O faithfull soul, make ready thy heart for this bridegroom, that he may vouchsafe to come unto thee, and dwell within thee. For he saith, *If any love me, he will keep my words, & we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him.* Give therefore admittance unto Christ, and deny entrance to all others. When thou hast Christ, thou art rich, and he will suffice thee. He will be thy faithfull and provident helper in all things, so as

thou ſhalt not need to truſt in men. For men are ſoon changed, and quickly fail, but Chriſt remaineth for ever, and ſtandeth firmly unto the end.

3. There is little truſt to be put in frail and mortall man, though he be profitable & dear unto thee: neither oughteſt thou much to be grieved, if ſometimes he croſſe and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be againſt thee; and ſo on the contrary, they often turn like unto the wind. Put all thy truſt in God, let him be thy fear and thy love: He will anſwer for thee, and do in all things what is beſt. Thou haſt not here an abiding city; and whereſoever thou be, thou art a ſtranger & pilgrime: neither ſhalt thou ever have reſt, unleſſe thou be moſt inwardly united unto Chriſt.

4. Why doſt thou here gaze about, ſince this is not the place of thy reſt? In heaven ought to be thy dwelling, and all earthly things are to

to be lookt upon as it were by the way. All things paſſe away, and thou together with them. Beware thou cleave not unto them, leſt thou be entangled, and ſo doſt periſh. Let thy thought be on the Higheſt, and thy prayer directed unto Chriſt without ceaſing. If thou canſt not contemplate high and heavenly things, reſt thy ſelf in the paſſion of Chriſt, and dwell willingly in his holy wounds. For if thou fly devoutly unto the wounds and precious marks of the Lord Ieſus, thou ſhalt feel great comfort in tribulation: neither wilt thou much care for being deſpiſed of men, and wilt eaſily bear words of detractation.

5. Chriſt was alſo in the world deſpiſed of men, and in greateſt neceſſity, forſaken by his acquaintance and friends in the midſt of ſlanders. Chriſt would ſuffer and be deſpiſed; and dareſt thou complain of any? Chriſt had adverſaries and backbiters; and wilt thou

have all men thy friends and benefactours? For what shall thy patience be crowned, if no adversity happen unto thee? If thou wilt suffer no adversity, how wilt thou be the friend of Christ? Suffer with Christ and for Christ, if thou desire to reign with Christ.

6. If thou hadst but once perfectly entred into the secrets of Iesus, and tasted a little of his ardent affection; then wouldst thou not weigh thine own commodity or discommodity, but wouldst rather rejoyce at slanders, when they should chance to be cast upon thee: for the love of Iesus maketh a man to despise himself. A lover of Iesus and of the truth, and a true inward Christian & one free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himself unto God, and lift himself above himself in spirit, and with the greatest enjoyment of his soul rest in God.

7. He that judgeth of all things as they are, and not as they are said

and

and esteemed to be, is truly wise; and taught rather by God then men. He that can live inwardly, and make small reckoning of outward things, neither requireth places, nor attendeth times, for performing of religious exercises. A spirituall man quickly recollecteth himself because he never poureth out himself wholly to outward things. He is not hindred by outward labour or businesse, which may be necessary for the time: but as things fall out, so he frameth himself unto them. He that hath well ordered and disposed all things within, careth not for the strange and perverse carriages of men. So much is a man hindred and distracted, by how much he draweth *externall* matters unto himself.

8. If all went well with thee, and if thou wert well purged, all things would fall out to thy good and advantage. But many things displease and often trouble thee, because thou art not yet perfectly dead

dead unto thy self, nor separated from all earthly things. Nothing so defileth and intangleth the heart of man, as the impure love to creatures. If thou refuse outward comfort, thou wilt be able to contemplate the things of heaven, and often receive internall joy.

CHAP. II.

Of humble submission.

RESpect not much who is with thee, or who is against thee: but endeavour and take care that God may be with thee in every thing thou doest. Have a good conscience, and God will defend thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canst hold thy peace and suffer, without doubt thou shalt see that our Lord will help thee. He knoweth the time and manner how to deliver thee, and therefore thou oughtest to resigne thy self unto him. It belongs to God to help, and to deliver from all shame. Often-

tentimes it is very profitable for the keeping us more humble, that others know & reprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbleth himself for his faults, then he easily pacifieth others, and quickly satisfieth those that are offended with him. God protecteth and delivereth the humble; he loveth & comforteth the humble; unto the humble man he inclineth himself; unto the humble he giveth great grace; & after his humiliation he raiseth him unto glory. Unto the humble he revealeth his secrets, and sweetly draweth and inviteth him unto himself. The humble perſō though he suffer shame, is yet in peace; for that he resteth in God, & not in the world. Do not think that thou hast profited any thing, unlesse thou esteem thy self inferiour to all.

Chap. III.

Of a good and peaceable man

First, keep thy self in peace, and then mayst thou pacifie others.

A peaceable man doth more good then he that is well learned. A passionate man turneth even good into evil, and easily believeth the worst. A good peaceable man turneth all things into good. He that is well in peace, is not suspicious of any. But he that is discontented and troubled, is tossed with divers suspicions: he is neither quiet himself, nor suffereth others to be quiet. He often speaketh that which he ought not to speak; and omitteth that which were more expedient for him to do. He considereth what others are bound to do; and neglecteth that which he is bound to himself. First therefore have a carefull zeal over thy self, and then thou mayst justly shew thy self zealous also of thy neighbours good.

2. Thou knowest well how to excuse & colour thine own deeds, and thou wilt not receive the excuses of others. It were more meet that thou didst accuse thy self, and excu-

excusedst thy brother. If thou wilt be born withall, bear also with another. Behold how far off thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation, but only against himself. It is no great matter to converse with the good, and those that are of a gentle disposition; for that is naturally pleasing to all, & every one willingly enjoyeth peace, and loveth those best that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with unquiet, and perverse men, or with the disorderly, or such as contradict us, is a great grace, and a very commendable and manly deed.

3. Some there are that keep themselves in peace, and are in peace also with others. And there are some that neither are in peace themselves, nor suffer others to be in peace. Some there are who are troublesome to others, but always more troublesome to themselves.

And

And others there are that keep themselves in peace, and labour to bring others unto peace. Our whole peace in this miserable life consisteth rather in humble suffering, then in not feeling adversities. He that can best tell how to suffer, will best keep himself in peace. He is a conquerour of himself, a Lord of the world, a friend of Christ, and heir of heaven.

Chap. IV.

Of a pure mind, and upright intention.

With two wings man is lifted up from earthly vanities, that is, with *simplicity* and *purity*. Simplicity ought to be in our intention: Purity in our affection. Simplicity doth intend God: Purity doth apprehend and take him. No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from all inordinate affection. If thou intend and seek nothing else but the will of God and the good of thy neighbour, thou

thou ſhalt enjoy internall liberty. If thy heart were ſincere and upright, then every creature would be unto thee a looking glaſſe of life, and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature ſo little and abject that repreſenteth not the goodneſſe of God.

2. If thou wert inwardly good and pure, then thou wouldeſt be well able to ſee and underſtand all things without any impediment. A pure heart penetrateth heaven and hell. Such as every one is inwardly, ſo he judgeth outwardly. If there be joy in the world, ſurely a man of a pure heart poſſeſſeth it. And if there be any where tribulation and affliction, an evil conſcience beſt feels it. As iron put into the fire looſeth his ruſt, and becometh all bright like fire: ſo he that wholly turneth himſelf unto God, is purged from all *foulneſſe and* ſlothfulneſſe, and is changed into a new man.

3. When one beginneth to wax cold,

cold, then he is afraid of a small labour, and willingly receiveth externall comfort. But when he once beginneth to overcome himself perfectly, and to walk manfully in the way of God; then he esteemeth those things to be light, which before seemed grievous unto him.

Chap. V.

Of the consideration of ones self.

We cannot trust much to our selves, for that grace oftentimes and understanding is wanting. There is but little light in us, and that which we have we quickly loose by our negligence. And oftentimes we do not perceive our own inward blindnesse. We often do evil, and excuse it worse. We are sometimes moved with passion, and we think it to be Zeal. We reprehend small things in others, and passe over greater matters in our selves. We quickly feel and weigh what we suffer at the hands of others: but we mind not what

what others ſuffer from us. He that doth well and rightly conſider his own works, will find little cauſe to judge hardly of another.

2. The inward Chriſtian preferreth the care of himſelf before all other cares. And he that diligently attendeth unto himſelf, doth ſeldome ſpeak much of others. Thou wilt never be ſo inwardly religious, unleſſe thou paſſe over other mens matters with ſilence, and look eſpecially to thy ſelf. If thou attend wholly unto God and thy ſelf, thou wilt be little moved with whatſoever thou ſeeſt abroad. Where art thou, when thou art not with thy ſelf? And when thou haſt run over all, what haſt thou then profited, if thou haſt neglected thy ſelf? If thou deſireſt peace of mind and true union, thou muſt put all things behind thee, and look only upon thy ſelf.

3. Thou ſhalt therefore profit much, if thou keep thy ſelf free from all temporall cares. Thou ſhalt

shalt greatly decrease, if thou esteem any thing of this world. Let nothing be great unto thee, nothing high, nothing gratefull, nothing acceptable, but only God himself, or that which is of God. Esteem all comfort vain which thou receivest from any creature. A soul that loveth God, despiseth all things that be inferiour unto God. God alone is everlasting, and of infinite greatnesse, filling all creatures: the souls solace, and the true joy of the heart.

CHAP. VI.

Of the joy of a good conscience.

THe glory of a good man, is the testimony of a good conscience. Have a good conscience, & thou shalt ever have joy. A good conscience is able to bear very much, and is very chearfull in adversities. An evil conscience is alwayes fearfull and unquiet. Thou shalt rest sweetly, if thy heart do not reprehend thee. Do thou never

ver rejoyce, but when thou haſt done well. Sinners have never true mirth, nor feel inward peace; becauſe *there is no peace to the wicked*, ſaith the Lord. And if they ſhould ſay, We are in peace, no evil ſhall fall upon us, and who ſhall dare to hurt us? believe them not; for upon a ſudden will ariſe the wrath of God, and their deeds ſhall be brought to nought, and their thoughts ſhall periſh.

2. To glory in tribulation is no hard thing for him that loveth; for to glory ſo, is to glory in the Croſs of our Lord. That glory is ſhort, which is given and received from men. Sorrow alwayes accompanieth the glory of the world. The glory of the good is in their conſciences, and not in the tongues of men. The gladneſſe of the juſt is of God, and in God: and their joy is of the truth. He that deſireth true and everlaſting glory, careth not for that which paſſeth away with time. And he that ſeeketh tempo-

temporall glory, or contemneth it not from his heart; sheweth himself but little to esteem of the glory of heaven. He enjoyeth great tranquillity and peace of mind, that careth neither for the praises, nor dispraises of men.

3. He will easily be content & pacified, whose conscience is pure. He is not the more holy, though thou commend him: nor the more abject, though thou dispraise him. What thou art, that thou art: neither canst thou be said to be greater, then what thou art in the sight of God. If thou consider what thou art within thee, thou wilt not care what men say of thee. Man seeth in the face, but God looketh into the heart. Man considereth the deeds, but God weigheth the intention. To do alwayes well, and to esteem little of himself, is a signe of an humble soul. To refuse to be comforted by any creature, is a signe of great purity, and inward confidence.

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4. He that ſeeketh no witneſs for himſelf from without, doth ſhew that he hath wholly committed himſelf unto God. *For not he that commendeth himſelf, the ſame is approved* (ſaith bleſſed Paul) *but whom God commendeth.* To walk inwardly with God, and not to be poſſeſſed with any outward affection, is the ſtate of a ſpirituall man.

CHAP. VII.

Of the love of Ieſus above all things.

BLeſſed is he that underſtandeth what it is to love Ieſus, and to deſpiſe himſelf for Ieſus. Thou oughteſt to leave thy beloved, for thy beloved; for that Ieſus will be beloved alone above all things. The love of things created is deceitfull and unconſtant: the love of Ieſus is faithfull and conſtant. He that cleaveth unto creatures, ſhall fall with that which is ſubject to fall: He that imbraceth Ieſus, ſhall ſtand firmly for ever. Love him, and keep him for thy friend

friend, who when all go away, will not forsake thee, nor suffer thee to perish in the end. Thou must once be left of all, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Keep close to Iesus both in life and death, and commit thy self unto his trust, who, when all fail, can alone help thee. Thy beloved is of that nature, that he will not admit of a corrivall; but will have thy heart alone, and sit like a King in his own throne. If thou couldest purge thy self perfectly of all creatures, Iesus would willingly dwell with thee. Whatsoever thou reposest in men, out of Iesus, is all no better then lost. Trust not nor relie upon a reed full of wind: for that all flesh is as grasse, and all the glory thereof shall wither away as the flower of the field.

3. Thou shalt quickly be deceived, if thou look onely to the outward shew of men. And if in them thou seekest thy comfort & profit, thou shalt often feel losse.

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If thou ſeekeſt Ieſus in all things, thou ſhalt ſurely find Ieſus. But if thou ſeekeſt thy ſelf, thou ſhalt alſo find thy ſelf, but to thy own harm. For man doth more hurt himſelf if he ſeek not Ieſus, then the whole world and all his adverſaries could annoy him.

CHAP. VIII.

Of familiar converſation with Ieſus.

WHen Ieſus is preſent, all is well, & nothing ſeemeth difficult: but when Ieſus is abſent, every thing is hard. When Ieſus ſpeaketh not inwardly unto us, our comfort is nothing worth: but if Ieſus ſpeak but one word, we feel much conſolation. Did not Mary preſently riſe from the place where ſhe wept, when Martha ſaid unto her, *The maſter is come, & calleth for thee*? Happy is the hour when Ieſus calleth from tears to ſpirituall joy. How drie and hard art thou without Ieſus! How fooliſh and vain, if thou deſire any thing out of Ieſus! Is not this a greater loſſe,

then if thou shouldest lose the whole world?

2. What can the world profit thee without Iesus? To be without Iesus is a grievous hell; and to be with Iesus is a sweet Paradise. If Iesus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee. He that findeth Iesus findeth a good treasure, yea a good above all goods: And he that loseth Iesus, loseth too much, and more then the whole world. He is most poore that liveth without Iesus: and he most rich that is well with Iesus.

3. It is a piece of great skill to know how to converse with Iesus, and great wisdome to know how to keep Iesus. Be humble & peaceable, and Iesus will be with thee. Be devout and quiet, and Iesus will stay with thee. Thou mayest soon drive away Iesus & lose his grace if thou turn aside to outward things. And if thou shouldst drive him from thee, and lose him, unto whom wilt thou flie, and what

friend

friends wilt thou then ſeek? Without a friend thou canſt not well live: and if Ieſus be not above all a friend unto thee, thou ſhalt be too too ſorrowfull and deſolate. Thou doeſt therefore fooliſhly, if thou doſt truſt or rejoyce in any other. It is better for thee to have all the world againſt thee, then Ieſus offended with thee. Amongſt all things therefore that be dear unto thee, let Ieſus alone be thy chiefeſt beloved.

4. Love all for Ieſus, but Ieſus for himſelf. Ieſus Chriſt alone is ſingularly to be beloved; who alone is found to be good and faithfull above all friends. For him, & in him, let as well friends as foes be dear unto thee; and all theſe are to be prayed for, that all may know and love him. Never deſire to be ſingularly commended or beloved, for that appertaineth onely unto God, who hath none like unto himſelf. Neither do thou deſire that the heart of any ſhould be ſet

on thee, nor do thou set thy heart on the love of any: but let Iesus be in thee, and in every good man.

5. Be pure and free within, and intangle not thy heart with any creature. Thou oughtest to be as it were naked, and to carry a pure heart to God, if thou wouldst be free to consider and see how sweet the Lord is. And truly, unlesse thou be prevented and drawn by his grace, thou shalt never attain to that happinesse to forsake and cast off all, that thou alone maist be united to him alone. For when the grace of God cometh unto a man, then he is made able for all things. And when it goeth away, he is poor and weak, and as it were left onely unto the lash & scourge of every adversary. In this thou oughtest not to be dejected, nor despair; but to resigne thy self with all indifferencie unto the will of God, and to bear all things that befall thee for the glory of Christ: for after winter followeth sum-

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mer, after night cometh day, and after a tempest, fair weather.

CHAP. IX.

Of the want of all comfort.

IT is no hard matter to despise humane comfort, when we have divine. It is much and very much, to be able to want both humane and divine comfort; and for the glory of God, to be willing to endure desolation of heart; and to seek himself in nothing, nor to regard his own merit. What great matter is it, if thou be cheerfull & devout at the coming of grace? This hour is wished for of all men. He rideth easily enough whom the grace of God carrieth. And what marvell if he feel not his burden, who is born up by the Almighty, and led by the soveraign guide?

2. We are alwayes willing to have something for our comfort: and a man doth hardly put off & *forsake* himself. The holy martyr St. Laurence overcame the world

with his Prelate; becauſe he deſpiſed whatſoever ſeemed delightſome in the world, & for the love of Chriſt patiently ſuffered Sixtus to be taken from him, whom he moſt dearly loved. He overcame therefore the love of man by the love of the Creatour; & he rather choſe the divine good pleaſure, then humane comfort. See thou alſo learn to forſake ſome neceſſary thing, and a beloved friend, for the love of God. Be not grieved when thou art forſaken by a friend, knowing that we all at length muſt be ſeparated one from another.

3. A man muſt fight long, and mightily with himſelf, before he get the full victory over himſelf, & be able to draw his whole heart in to God. When a man truſteth in himſelf, he eaſily ſlideth unto humane comforts. But a true lover of Chriſt, and a diligent follower of virtue, betakes not himſelf to *humane* comforts, nor ſeeketh ſuch ſenſible ſweetneſſes, but rather hard

hard exercises, and to sustain great labours for Christ.

4. When therefore spirituall comfort is given thee from God, receive it thankfully: but know that it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. Be not puffed up, joy not too much, neither do thou presume vainly; but be rather the more humble for that gift, and more wary and sollicitous in all thine actions; for that hour will passe away, and temptation will succeed. When consolation is taken from thee, despair not presently; but with humility and patience wait for the heavenly visitation: for God is able again to give thee greater consolation. This is not new nor strange unto them that have experience in the way of God: for the great Saints & ancient Prophets had oftentimes experience of such kind of vicissitudes.

5. For which cause one under the enjoyment of divine favour, said, *I said in my prosperity, I shall never be*

moved. But in the want of this, he addeth what he found in himself, saying, *Thou turned'st thy face from me, and I became troubled*. Yet doth he not despair in the midst of these changes, but more earnestly prayeth unto the Lord, and saith, *Vnto thee, O Lord, I will cry, and I will pray unto my God*. Lastly, he receiveth the fruit of his prayer, and witnesseth that he was heard, saying, *The Lord hath heard me, & taken pity on me: the Lord is become my helper*. But wherein? *Thou hast turned*, saith he, *my sorrow into joy, and thou hast compassed me about with gladnesse*. If great Saints have been so dealt withall, we that are weak & poor ought not to despair, if we be sometimes fervent & sometimes cold: for the Spirit cometh and goeth, according to the good pleasure of his will. For which cause blessed Iob saith, *Thou visitest him early in the morning, and suddenly thou provest him*.

6. Whereupon therefore can I hope,

hope, or wherein ought I to truſt, but in the great mercy of God alone, and in the onely hope of heavenly grace? For whether I enjoy the preſence of good men, or religious brethren, or faithfull friends, or holy books, or excellent treatiſes, or ſweet ſongs and hymns, all theſe help little, and have little ſavour, when grace forſaketh me, and I remain left in mine own poverty. At ſuch a time there is no better remedy then patience, and the ordering of my ſelf according to the will of God.

7. I never found any ſo religious & devout, that hath not had ſometimes a withdrawing of grace, or felt not ſome decreaſe of zeal. There was never Saint ſo highly rapt, and illuminated, who firſt or laſt was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the high contemplation of God, who hath not been exerciſed with ſome tribulation for Gods ſake. For temptation going before, is wont to be a ſigne of enſuing

comfort. And unto those that are proved by temptations, heavenly comfort is promised. *He that shall overcome*, saith he, *I will give him to eat of the tree of life.*

8. But divine comfort is given, that a man may be stronger to bear adversities. There followeth also temptation, lest he should wax proud of any good. The devil sleepeth nor, neither is the flesh as yet dead: therefore cease not to prepare thy self to the battel: for on thy right hand and on thy left are enemies that never rest.

Chap. X.

Of thankfulnesse for the grace of God.

WHy seekest thou rest, since thou art born to labour? Dispose thy self to patience rather then to comforts: and to the bearing of the crosse, rather then to gladnesse. What secular person is there that would not willingly receive spirituall joy and comfort, if he could alwayes have it? For spirituall comforts exceed all the delights

lights of the world, & pleaſures of the fleſh. All worldly delights are either vain or unclean: but ſpirituall delights are onely pleaſant and honeſt, ſprung from virtue, and infuſed by God into pure minds. But no man can alwayes enjoy theſe divine comforts according to his deſire: for the time of temptation is not long away.

2. Falſe freedome of mind, and great truſt of our ſelves is very contrary to heavenly viſitations. God doth well in giving the grace of comfort; but man doth evil in not returning all again unto God with thankſgiving. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in us, becauſe we are not thankfull to the giver, & return them not wholly to the head-fountain. For grace ever attendeth him that is thankfull: and from the proud ſhall be taken that which is wont to be given to the humble.

3. I deſire not that conſolation that taketh from me compunction;

nor do I affect that contemplation which leadeth to haughtineſſe of mind. For all that is high, is not holy; nor all that is ſweet, good; nor every deſire, pure; nor every thing that is dear unto us, is grateſull to God. I do willingly accept of that grace, whereby I may ever become more humble and affected with an holy fear, & be made more ready to forſake my ſelf. He that is taught by the gift of grace, and ſchool'd by the ſcourge of the withdrawing thereof, will not dare to attribute any good to himſelf, but will rather acknowledge himſelf poore and naked. Give unto God that which is Gods, and aſcribe unto thy ſelf that which is thine own; that is, give thanks to God for his grace; & acknowledge that nothing is to be attributed to thee, but onely ſinne and the puniſhment due thereunto.

4. Set thy ſelf alwayes in the loweſt place & the higheſt ſhall be given thee: for the higheſt conſiſt not with-

without the loweſt. The chiefeſt Saints before God, are the leaſt in their own judgements: & how much the more glorious, ſo much the humbler within themſelves. Thoſe that are full of truth and heavenly glory, are not deſirous of vain glory. Thoſe that are firmly ſetled & grounded in God, can no way be proud. And they that aſcribe all unto God, what good ſoever they have received, ſeek not glory one of another, but would have that glory which is from God alone: and deſire above all things to praiſe God in himſelf, and in all the Saints, and alwayes tend unto the ſame.

5. Be therefore thankfull for the leaſt gift, ſo ſhalt thou be meet to receive grater. Let the leaſt be unto thee alſo as the greateſt, and the moſt contemptible as an eſpeciall gift. If thou conſider the worth of the giver, no gift will ſeem little, or of too mean eſteem. For it is not little that is given by the moſt high God. Yea, if he ſhould give puniſh-

punishment and stripes, it ought to be gratefull; for that he doth it always for our welfare, whatsoever he permitteth to happen unto us. He that desireth to keep the grace of God, let him be thankfull for the grace given, and patient for the taking away thereof. Let him pray that it may return. Let him be wary and humble; lest he lose it.

CHAP. XI.

How few the lovers of the Crosse of Christ are.

IEsus hath now many lovers of his heavenly kingdome, but few bearers of his Crosse. He hath many desirous of comfort, but few of tribulation. He findeth many companions of his table, but few of his abstinence. All desire to rejoyce with him, few will suffer any thing for him, *or with him*. Many follow Iesus unto the breaking of bread: but few to the drinking of the cup of his passion. Many reverence his miracles: few follow the ignominy of his Crosse. Many love Iesus as long

long as adverſities happen not. Many praiſe and bleſs him, as long as they receive any comforts from him. But if Ieſus hide himſelf, and leave them but a while; they fall either into complaint, or into too much dejection of mind.

2. But they that love Ieſus for Ieſus, and not for ſome comfort of their own, bleſſe him in all tribulation and anguiſh of heart, as well as in the greateſt comfort. And although he ſhould never give them comfort, they notwithſtanding would ever praiſe him, and always give him thanks.

3. O how powerfull is the pure love of Ieſus, which is mixed with no ſelf-love nor proper intereſt! Are not all thoſe to be called hirelings, that ever ſeek comforts? Do they not ſhew themſelves to be rather lovers of themſelves then of Chriſt, that always think of their own commodity and gain? Where may one be found that will ſerve God freely?

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4. It is hard to find any one so spirituall that is stript of *the love of* all *earthly* things. For where is any one to be found that is indeed poor in spirit. and free from all *affection of* creatures? Hee's a Iewell of such price as is scarce to be met with in these parts. If a man should give all his wealth, yet is it nothing. And if he should outwardly expresse great repentance, yet it is little. And if he should attain to all knowledge, he is yet a farre off. And if he should be of great virtue, and very fervent devotion, yet there is much wanting: to wit, one thing, which is most necessary for him. What is that? That leaving all, he forsake himself, and go wholly from himself, and retain nothing of self-love: And when he hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let him think that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not weigh that much which might be much esteemed; but according to truth let him

him affirm himself to be an unprofitable servant, as our Saviour hath said, *When you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.* Then may he be truly poor and naked in spirit, and say with the Prophet, I am alone and poor: yet no man richer, no man more powerfull, no man more free then he that can leave himself and all things, and set himself in the lowest place.

CHAP. XII.

Of the high way of the Holy Crosse.

UNto many this speech seemeth hard, *Denie thy self, take up thy Crosse, and follow Iesus.* But it will be much harder to hear that last word. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.* For they that now willingly hear and follow the word of the Crosse, shall not then fear to hear the sentence of everlasting damnation. This sign of the Crosse shall be in heaven, when

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our Lord shall come to judgement. Then all the servants of the Crosse, who in their lifetime conformed themselves unto Christ crucified, shall draw near unto Christ the Iudge with great confidence.

2. Why therefore feareſt thou to take up the Crosse, which leadeth thee to a Kingdome? In the Crosse is salvation, in the Crosse is life, in the Crosse is protection against our enemies, in the Crosse is infusion of heavenly sweetneſſe, in the Crosse is strength of mind, in the Crosse is joy of spirit, in the Crosse is the height of virtue, in the Crosse is the perfection of sanctitie. There is no salvation of the soul, nor hope of everlasting life but in the Crosse. Take up therefore thy Crosse and follow Ieſus, and thou shalt go into life everlasting. He is gone before, bearing his Crosse; and is dead for thee on the Crosse; that thou mayeſt also bear thy Crosse, and desire to die

die on the Croſſe *with him.* For if thou dieſt with him, thou ſhalt alſo live with him. And if thou be his companion in pain, thou ſhalt be partaker with him alſo in glorie.

3. Behold in the Croſſe all doth conſiſt, and all lyeth in our dying *upon it*: for there is no other way unto life, and unto true inward peace, but the way of the Holy Croſſe, and of daily mortification. Go where thou wilt, ſeek whatſoever thou wilt, thou ſhalt not find a higher way above, nor a ſafer way below, then the way of the Holy Croſſe. Diſpoſe and order all things according to thy will and judgement: yet thou ſhalt ever find, that of neceſſity thou muſt ſuffer ſomewhat either willingly or againſt thy will, and ſo thou ſhalt ever find the Croſſe. For either thou ſhalt feel pain in thy body, or in thy ſoul thou ſhalt ſuffer tribulation of ſpirit.

4. Sometimes thou ſhalt be for-

forsaken of God, sometimes thou shalt be troubled by thy neighbours: and which is more, oftentimes thou shalt be irksome to thy self: neither canst thou be delivered or eased by any remedy or comfort; but so long as pleaseth God, thou oughtest to bear it. For God will have thee learn to suffer tribulation without comfort; and that thou subject thy self wholly to him, and become more humble by tribulation. No man hath so cordiall a feeling of the passion of Christ, as he who hath suffered the like himself. The Crosse therefore is alwaies ready, and every where waits for thee. Thou canst not escape it whithersoever thou runnest: for whereſoever thou goest, thou carriest thy self with thee, and shalt ever find thy self: both above and below, without and within, which way soever thou dost turn thee, every where thou shalt find the crosse: and every where of necessity thou must have pa-

patience, if thou wilt have inward peace, and enjoy an everlasting Crown.

5. If thou bear the Crosse willingly, it will bear thee, and lead thee to thy desired end, to wit, where there shall be an end of suffering, though here there shall not. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makest for thy self a new burden, and encreasest thy load, and yet notwithstanding thou must bear it. If thou cast away one Crosse, without doubt thou shalt find another, and that perhaps a more heavy one.

6. Thinkest thou to escape that which no man could ever avoid? which of the Saints in the world was without crosses, and tribulation? Verily Iesus Christ our Lord was never one hour without pain of suffering, so long as he lived. *Christ* (saith he) *ought to suffer, and rise again from the dead, and so to enter into his glory*, Luke 24: and how dost thou seek any other way then

then this high way which is the way of the Holy Crosse.

7. The whole life of Christ was a Crosse & Martyrdome: and dost thou seek rest & joy? Thou art deceived, thou art deceived if thou seekest any other thing then to suffer tribulations: for this whole mortall life is full of miseries, and environed on every side with crosses. And how much the more one hath profited in spirit, so much the heavier crosses he oftentimes findeth: for the love he beareth to God increaseth the grief which he endureth for his banishment.

8. But yet this man, though so many wayes afflicted, is not without some refreshing comfort, for that he perceiveth much benefit to accrew unto him by the bearing of his Crosse. For whilest he willingly putteth himself under it, all the burden of tribulation is turned into the confidence of divine comfort. And how much the more the flesh is wasted by affliction, so much

much the more is the ſpirit ſtrengthened by inward grace. And ſometimes he is ſo comforted with the deſire of tribulation and adverſity, for the love of conforming himſelf to the Croſſe of Chriſt, that he would not wiſh at any time to be without ſorrow and tribulation: becauſe he believeth that ſo much the more acceptable he ſhall be unto God, how much the more, and more grievous things he can ſuffer for him. This is not the power of man, but it is the grace of Chriſt, that can, and doth ſo much in frail fleſh; that what naturally it alwaies abhorreth and flyeth, that by fervour of ſpirit, it encounters with delight.

9. It is not according to mans inclination to bear the Croſſe, to chaſtiſe and ſubdue the body, to flie honours, to ſuffer contumelies with a willing heart, to deſpiſe himſelf and to wiſh to be deſpiſed, to bear all adverſities and dammages, and to deſire no proſperitie

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in this world. If thou considere thy self, thou shalt be able to perform no such matter of thy self. But if thou trustest in the Lord strength shall be given thee from heaven, and the world and flesh shall be made subject to thy command. Neither shalt thou fear thy enemy the Devil, if thou be armed with faith, and beareſt the Crosse of Christ.

10. Set therefore thy self, like a good and faithfull servant of Christ, to bear manfully the Cross of thy Lord, who was crucified for thee out of love. Prepare thy self to bear many adversities and divers kinds of troubles in this miserable life: for so it will be with thee, whereſoever thou be, and so surely thou wilt find it, whereſoever thou hide thy self. So it must be, and there is no remedie or means to avoid tribulation and sorrow, but to bear them. Drink of the cup of our Lord heartily, if thou wilt be his friend, and desi-

reſt

reſt to have part with him. As for comforts, leave them to God: let him do therein as ſhall beſt pleaſe him. Set thou thy ſelf to ſuffer tribulations, and account them the greateſt comforts: for that the ſufferings of this life are not worthy of the glory which is to come, although thou alone could'ſt ſuffer them all.

11. When thou ſhalt come to this eſtate, that tribulation ſhall ſeem ſweet and ſavoury unto thee for Chriſt: then thou maieſt think it is well with thee, for thou haſt found a Paradiſe upon earth. As long as it is grievous to thee to ſuffer, and that thou deſireſt to flie it; ſo long ſhalt thou be ill at eaſe: & the tribulation thou flyeſt will follow thee every where.

12. If thou doſt ſet thy ſelf to that thou oughteſt, to wit, to ſuffer, and to die to thy ſelf, it will quickly be better with thee, and thou ſhalt find peace. Although thou ſhouldeſt have been rapt

even unto the third heaven with Paul, thou art not for this secured that thou shalt suffer no adversity. *I* (saith Iesus) *will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name.* It remaineth therefore, that thou suffer, if thou wilt love Iesus, and perpetually serve him.

13. O that thou wert worthy to suffer something for the name of Iesus! how great glory would it be unto thee, what joy to all the Saints of God, how great edification also to thy neighbour! For all do commend patience, though few desire to suffer. With great reason thou oughtest to be willing to suffer a little for Christ; since many suffer far greater things for the world.

14. Know for certain that thou oughtest to lead a dying life. And how much the more every one dieth to himself, so much the more doth he begin to live to God. No man is fit to attain unto heavenly things, unless he submit himself

ſelf to the bearing of adverſities for Chriſt. Nothing is more gratefull unto God, nothing more wholeſome to thee in this world, then to ſuffer willingly for Chriſt. And if it were in thy choice, thou ſhouldeſt rather wiſh to ſuffer adverſities for Chriſt, then to enjoy the delight of many comforts; becauſe hereby thou ſhouldeſt be more like unto Chriſt, and more conformable to all the Saints. For our worthineſſe, and the proficiency of our ſpirituall eſtate conſiſteth not in many ſweetneſſes and comforts, but rather in ſuffering great afflictions and tribulations.

15. If there had been any better thing, and more profitable to the health of man then ſuffering, ſurely Chriſt would have ſhewed it by word and example. But he plainly exhorteth all the Diſciples that followed him, and all that deſire to follow him, to the bearing of the Croſſe, and ſaith, *If any man will*

will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Crosse, and follow me. So that when we have read and searched all, let this be the last conclusion, *That by many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God.*

THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the inward speech of Christ unto a faithfull soul.

I Will hear what the Lord God will speak in me. Blessed is the soul that heareth the Lord speaking in her, and receiveth from his mouth the word of comfort. Blessed are those eares that receive the sound of the divine voice, and listen not to the whisperings of the world. Blessed in-

indeed are those eares that hearken not to the voice which soundeth outwardly, but unto the Truth which teacheth inwardly. Blessed are the eyes that are shut to outward things, but open to those things that are internall. Blessed are they that enter into the inward things, and endeavour to prepare themselves more and more by daily excercises to the attaining of heavenly secrets. Blessed be they that delight to converse with God, and rid themselves of all worldly impediments.

2. Consider these things, my soul, and shut up the doore of thy sensuall desires, that thou maiest hear what thy Lord God speaketh in thee. Thus saith thy Beloved, I am thy safety, thy peace, and thy life; Keep thy self with me, and thou shalt find peace. Leave all transitorie things, and seek those that be everlasting. What are all temporall things, but deceiving snares? & what do all creatures avail

thee, if thou be forsaken by the Creatour? Forsake therefore all earthly things and labour to please thy Creatour, and be faithfull unto him, that thou maiest attain unto the true happinesse.

CHAP. II.

That Truth speaketh inwardly without noise of words.

CHRISTIAN. Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth: I am thy servant, grant me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies. Incline my heart to the words of thy mouth. Let thy speech distill as the dew *upon my soul.* The children of Israel in times past said unto Moses, *Speak thou unto us, and we will hear thee: Let not the Lord speak unto us, lest we die.* Not so Lord, not so, I beseech thee. But rather with the Prophet Samuel, I humbly and earnestly intreat, *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.* Let not Moses speak unto me, nor any of the Prophets, but do thou rather speak, my Lord God,

God, the inſpirer and enlightner of all the Prophets: for thou alone without them canſt perfectly inſtruct me, but they without thee can profit nothing.

2. They indeed may ſound forth words, but they cannot give ſpirit & life: they ſpeak marvelous well, but, if thou be ſilent, they inflame not the heart. They may teach the letter, but thou openeſt the ſenſe. They bring forth myſteries, but thou unlockeſt the meaning of ſealed things. They declare thy commandements, but thou helpeſt to fulfill them. They ſhew the way, but thou giveſt ſtrength to walk in it. They work onely exteriourly, but thou inſtructeſt and enlightneſt the hearts. They water outwardly, but thou giveſt fruitfulneſſe. They make a noiſe with words, but thou giveſt underſtanding to the hearing.

3. Let not therefore Moſes ſpeak unto me, but thou my Lord God, the everlaſting Truth; leſt I die,

and prove unfruitfull, if I be warned outwardly onely, and not inflamed within; lest the word heard and not fulfilled, known and not loved, believed and not observed, turn to my condemnation. Speak therefore Lord, for thy servant heareth, for thou hast the words of everlasting life. Speak unto me to the comfort of my soul, and to the amendment of my whole life, and to thy praise and glory, and everlasting honour.

CHAP. III.

That the words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.

CHRIST. Sonne, hear my words, words of greatest sweetnesse, excelling all the knowledge of the Philosophers and wise men of this world. My words are *spirit and life*, not to be weighed by the understanding of man. They are not to be drawn to vain liking, but to be heard with silence, and to be recieved with all humility and great affection.

CHRI-

CHRISTIAN. And I ſaid, Bleſſed is the man whom thou ſhalt inſtruct, O Lord, and ſhalt teach thy law, that thou mayeſt give him reſt from the evil dayes, and that he be not deſtroyed upon earth.

2. CHRIST. I (*ſaith our Lord*) have taught the Prophets from the beginning, and ceaſe not in theſe dayes to ſpeak to every one: but many are hardened & deaf to my ſpeech. The greater number do more willingly liſten to the world, then to God: and follow ſooner the deſires of their fleſh, then the will of God. The world promiſeth temporall and ſmall things, and is ſerved with great eagerneſſe: I promiſe moſt high & eternall things, and the hearts of men are nothing moved therewith. Who is he that ſerveth and obeyeth me with equall care to that with which the world and the Lords thereof are ſerved? *Blush O Sidon, ſaith the ſea.* And if thou ask the cauſe, hear wherefore: For a

little Prebend a long journey is undertaken; for everlasting life many will scarce once lift a foot from the ground. A thing of small value is sought after greedily: for a peny sometimes there is foul contention: for a vain thing and sleight promise, men cease not to toil day and night.

3. But *alas* for an unchangeable good, for an inestimable reward, for the highest honour and glory without end, they are loth to take the least pains. Blush therefore slothfull & complaining Servant, that they are found to be more readie to destruction, then thou to life. They rejoyce more in vanity then thou in the truth. And yet they are sometimes frustrated of their hope: but my promise deceiveth none, nor sendeth him away emptie that trusteth in me. I will give that which I have promised, I will fulfill that which I have said; but to him that remains faithfull in my love to the end. I

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am the rewarder of all that are good, and do trie my devout ſervants with ſtrong trialls.

4. Write my words in thy heart, and think diligently of them: for they will be very neceſſarie in time of temptation. What thou underſtandeſt not when thou readeſt, thou ſhalt know in the day of viſitation. I am wont to viſit my elect two ſeverall wayes, to wit, with temptation, and comfort. And I daily reade two leſſons unto them, one reprehending their vices, another exhorting them to the increaſe of virtues. He that hath my words & deſpiſeth them, hath within himſelf that ſhall judge him at the laſt day.

A prayer to implore the grace of devotion.

5. O Lord my God, thou art to me whatſoever is good. Who am I, that dare ſpeak unto thee? I am thy pooreſt ſervant, and a moſt vile worm; much more poor and con-

contemptible then I can or dare expresse. Remember yet O Lord, that I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing. Thou alone art good, just, and holy: thou canst do all things, thou doest all things, thou fillest all things, onely the sinner thou sendest empty away. Remember thy mercies, & fill my heart with thy grace, who wilt not that thy works be void and in vain.

6. How can I bear up my self in this miserable life, unlesse thou strengthen me with thy mercy and grace? Turn not thy face from me: delay not thy visitation; draw not away thy comfort, lest my soul become as the thirsty land unto thee. Lord, teach me to fulfull thy will; teach me to live worthily, & humbly in thy sight; for thou art my wildome, thou dost truly know me, and didst know me before the world was made, and before I was born into the world.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That we ought to live in truth and humility before God

CHRIST. Son, walk before me in sincerity and truth, and ever seek me in simplicity of heart. He that walketh before me in truth, shall be defended from evil incursions, and the Truth shall deliver him from seducers, and from the detractions of the wicked. If the Truth shall have made thee free, thou shalt be truly free, & shalt not care for the vain speeches of men.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, it is true. According as thou saidst, so I beseech thee let it be with me, let thy truth teach me, and keep me, and bring me safe to an happy end. Let it deliver me from all evil affection and inordinate love; and I shall walk with thee in great freedome of heart.

2. CHRIST. I will teach thee (saith the Truth) those things that are right and pleasing in my sight. Think of thy sins with great displea-

pleaſure and grief, and never eſteem thy ſelf any thing for thy good works. Thou art in very deed a ſinner, thou art ſubject to, and encumbred with, many paſſions. Of thy ſelf thou alwayes tendeſt to nothing; thou art quickly caſt down, quickly overcome, quickly troubled, quickly diſſolved. Thou haſt nothing wherein thou canſt glory, but many things for which thou oughteſt to deſpiſe thy ſelf; for thou art much weaker then thou art able to comprehend.

3. And therefore let nothing ſeem much unto thee whatſoever thou doeſt. Let nothing ſeem great, nothing precious and wonderfull; let nothing ſeem worthy of eſtimation, nothing high, nothing truly commendable and to be deſired, but that which is everlaſting. Let the eternall Truth above all things pleaſe thee. Let thy own great unworthineſſe alwayes diſpleaſe thee. Fear nothing, blame and flie nothing ſo much as thy

thy vices and ſins; which ought to diſpleaſe more then the loſſes of any thing whatſoever. Some walk not ſincerely in my ſight, but led by a certain curioſitie and pride, will know my ſecrets, and underſtand the high things of God, neglecting themſelves and their own ſalvation. Theſe oftentimes, for that I reſiſt them, do fall into great temptations and ſins, for their pride and curioſity.

4. Fear the judgements of God, dread the wrath of the Almighty. But diſcuſſe not the works of the Higheſt. Search thine own iniquities, in how much thou haſt offended, and how much good thou haſt neglected. Some carry their religion onely in books, ſome in pictures, ſome in outward ſigns and figures. Some have me in their mouths, but little in their hearts. There are others that being illuminated in their underſtanding, and purged in their affection do alwayes breath after things eter-

ternall, and are unwilling to hear of the things of this world, and do serve the necessities of nature with grief: and these perceive what the Spirit of truth speaketh in them: because it teacheth them to despise earthly, and love heavenly things; to neglect the world, and all the day and night to desire heaven.

Chap. V.

Of the wonderfull effect of divine love.

CHRISTIAN. I praise thee O heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Iesus Christ, for that thou hast vouchsafed to remember me a poor creature. O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, thanks be unto thee, who sometimes with thy comfort refreshest me unworthy of all comfort. I ever blesse and glorifie thee with thy only begotten Son, and the holy Ghost, for ever and ever. O Lord God, the holy lover of my soul, when thou shalt come into my heart, all that is within me will rejoyce.

joyce. Thou ert my glory and the exultation of my heart. Thou art my hope and refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But for that I am yet weak in love, and imperfect in virtue, I have need therefore to be ſtrengthened and comforted by thee: viſit me therefore often, and inſtruct me with thy holy diſcipline. Deliver me from evil paſſions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that being cured within and well purged, I may be made fit to love, ſtrong to ſuffer, and conſtant to perſevere.

3. Love is a great thing, in very truth a great good; which alone maketh every thing that is heavy, light; and beareth equally that which is unequall. For it carrieth a burden without a burden, and maketh every thing that is bitter, ſweet and ſavoury. The noble love of Ieſus inforceth man to do great things, and ſtirreth him up to deſire always what is moſt perfect

fect. Love will be aloft, and not kept down with any base thing. Love will be free and loose from all worldly affection, to the end it's inward sight be not prejudiced; that it be not either entangled by any temporall prosperity, or subdued by adversity. Nothing is sweeter then love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing more large, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in heaven or in earth: because love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God, above all creatures.

4. He that loveth, flyeth, runneth, and rejoyceth; he is free and not held in. He giveth all for all, and hath all in all, for that he resteth in one Highest above all, from whence all good floweth and proceedeth. He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods unto the giver. Love oftentimes knoweth no measure, but is inflamed above all measure. Love feeleth no burden, weigheth no pains,

pains, desireth above it's strength, complaineth not of impossibility, for that it thinketh all things lawfull and possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and performeth and bringeth many things to passe; whereas he that doth not love, fainteth and lies down:

5. Love watcheth, and sleeping sleepeth not: being wearied, is not tired; straightned, is not pressed; frightned, is not troubled: but like a lively flame and burning torch, breaketh upwards, and securely passeth through all. If any one loveth, he knoweth what this voice crieth; A loud cry in the eares of God is the ardent affection of the soul, which saith, *My God, my love, thou art wholly mine, and I wholly thine.*

Enlarge me in love, that with the inward mouth of my heart I may taste how sweet it is to love, and to be melted, and swim in thy love. Let me be possessed by love, mount-

mounting above my self with excessive fervour and admiration. Let me sing the song of love, let me follow thee on high my beloved; let my soul rejoycing through love, spend it self in thy praise. Let me love thee more then my self, and not my self but for thee, and all in thee that truly love thee, as the law of love commandeth which shineth out from thee.

7. Love is swift, sincere pious, pleasant and delightfull, strong, patient, faithfull, prudent, long suffering, manly, and never seeking it self. For where one seeketh himself, there he falleth from love. Love is circumspect, humble, and upright: not softly, nor light, not attending unto vain things; sober, chaste, constant, quiet, and guarded in all the senses. Love is subject and obedient to Superiours, mean and abject to it self, devout and thankfull unto God, trusting and hoping alwayes in him, even then when God imparteth no sweetness

unto

unto it: for without ſorrow none liveth in love.

8. He that is not ready to ſuffer all things, and ſtand to the will of his beloved, is not worthy to be called a lover. A lover ought to embrace willingly all that is hard and diſtaſtefull for his beloved; and not to turn away from him for any contrary accidents.

CHAP. VI.

Of the proof of a true Lover.

CHRIST. Son, thou art not yet a ſtrong and prudent lover. CHRISTIAN. Wherefore Lord? CHRIST. Becauſe thou giveſt over for a ſmall adverſity, and too greedily ſeekeſt comfort. A ſtrong lover ſtandeth firmly in temptations, and giveth not credit to the crafty perſwaſions of the enemy. As I pleaſe him in proſperity, ſo I am not unpleaſant to him in adverſity.

2. A prudent lover conſidereth not ſo much the gift of his lover, as the love of the giver. He rather eſtee-

esteemeth the good will then the custom
value, and placeth all gifts under thou d
his beloved. A noble lover resteth them
not in the gift, but in me above e- long
very gift. All therefore is not lost thou
if sometimes thou hast lesse taste matt
of me then thou wouldest. That 4.
good and sweet affection which my
thou sometimes feelest, is the ef- desir
fect of present grace, and a certain from
fore-taste of the heavenly Coun- from
trey; whereon thou must not rely passi
too much, for it goeth and cometh. mer
But to fight against evil motions gua
of the mind which may happen un- the
to thee, and to despise the sugge- virt
stions of the devil, is a notable tho
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3. Let not therefore strange pra
fancies forced into thee, of any co
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Retain a strong purpose & an up- th
right intention to God. Neither is Sa
it an illusion that sometimes thou ca
art suddenly rapt on high, and pre- o
sently returnest again unto the ac- th
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customed vanities of thy heart. For thou dost rather unwillingly suffer them, then commit them: and as long as they displease thee, and thou strivest against them, it is matter of reward, and no losse.

4. Know that thy ancient enemy doth ever strive to hinder thy desire to good, and to divert thee from all religious exercise: to wit, from the devout memory of my passion, from the profitable remembrance of thy sinnes, from the guard of thine own heart, & from the firm purpose of profiting in virtue. He injecteth many evil thoughts into thy mind, that he may cause a wearisomnesse and horrour in thee, to draw thee from prayer and holy reading. Humble confession is displeasing unto him; and if he could, he would cause thee to cease from receiving the Sacrament. Trust him not, nor care for him, although he should often set snares of deceit to intrap thee. Charge him with it when he sugge-

suggesteth evil & unclean thought unto thee; Say unto him, Away unclean spirit, blush miserable wretch; thou art very unclean that bringest such things unto mine ears. Away from me wicked deceiver, thou shalt have no part in me: but Iesus shall be with me as a strong warriour, and thou shalt stand confounded. I had rather die, and undergo any torment, then consent unto thee. Hold thy peace and be silent; I will hear thee no more, though thou shouldest work me many troubles. The Lord is my light & my salvation, whom shall I fear? If whole armies should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear: The Lord is my helper and my redeemer.

5. Fight like a good souldier: and if thou sometimes fall through frailty, take greater strength then before, trusting in my more abundant grace: and take great heed of vain pleasing of thy self and

and of pride. This brings many into errour, and makes them sometimes fall into almost incurable blindnesse. Let the fall of the proud, foolishly presuming of themselves, serve thee for a warning, and keep thee perpetually humble.

CHAP. VII.

That grace is to be hid under the vail of humility.

CHRIST. Sonne, it is more profitable and safe for thee to hide the grace of devotion; not to extoll thy self, nor to speak much, nor to esteem much thereof: but rather to despise thy self, and fear it, as given to one unworthy thereof. This affection is not to be cleaved unto, which may be quickly changed unto the contrary. Think when thou art in grace, how miserable & needy thou art wont to be without grace. Neither doth therein onely consist the proficiency of a spirituall life, when thou hast the grace of comfort; but when thou humbly, self-denyingly and patiently

suffereſt the withdrawing thereof: ſo that thou be not then leſſe diligent in the exerciſe of prayer, nor ſuffer the reſt of thy accuſtomed duties to be neglected; but that thou willingly perform what lieth in thee, according to the beſt of thy power and underſtanding: not neglecting thy ſelf wholly for the dryneſſe and trouble of mind which thou feeleſt.

2. There are many that when it ſucceedeth not well with them, preſently they become impatient or ſlothfull. The way of man is not alwayes in his power, but it belongeth to God to give & to comfort when he will, and how much he will, and whom he will; as it ſhall pleaſe him, & no more. Some unadviſed perſons have overthrown themſelves for *the greedy deſire which they had of* the grace of devotion; attempting more then they were able to perform, not weighing the meaſure of their weakneſſe, but following rather the deſire of their

their heart, then the judgement of reaſon. And becauſe they preſumed on greater matters then was pleaſing to God, they quickly loſt his grace. They became needy, and left in a dejected eſtate, that built themſelves neſts in heaven: to the end that being humbled and impoveriſhed, they might learn not to flie with their own wings, but to truſt under my wings. They that are yet but novices and unacquainted in the way of the Lord, unleſſe they govern themſelves by the counſell of diſcreet perſons, may eaſily be deceived and overthrown.

3. And if they will rather follow their own judgement, then giue credit to others that are experienced, their end will be dangerous, if they will not be drawn from their own conceit. Seldome thoſe that are ſelf-wiſe ſuffer themſelves humbly to be governed by others. A little knowledge with humility, & a ſlender underſtanding, is better then great treaſures of learning

with a vain self-liking. It is better for thee to have little then much of that whereof thou maiest be proud. He doth not discreetly, that wholly giveth himself over to mirth, forgetting his former poverty, and the chaste fear of God, which feareth to lose the grace which he hath obtained. Neither is he virtuously wise, that in time of adversity or any tribulation whatsoever, yieldeth to despairing thoughts, and thinketh and imagineth of me lesse confidently then he ought.

4. He that will be over secure in time of peace, shall be often found in time of war too dejected & fearfull. If thou couldest alwaies continue humble and lowly within thy self, and order and govern thy spirit well, thou shouldest not so soon fall into danger and offence. It is good counsell, that when fervour of spirit is kindled within thee, thou shouldest think what will become of thee, when that light shall leave

leave thee. And when that doth happen, remember the light may return again, which for thy instruction and my glory I have withdrawn for a time.

5. Such proof is often more profitable, then if thou shouldest alwayes enjoy prosperity according to thy desire. For a mans worthinesse is not to be judged by the number of visions and comforts which he hath, or by his knowledge in Scripture, or by his being placed in high degree; but in that he is grounded in true humility, & filled with divine love; if he alwayes purely & entirely seek the honour of God, if he esteem himself nothing, and unfeinedly dispise himself, and rejoyce more to be despised and humbled by others, then to be honoured.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a mean conceit of our selves in the sight of God.

CHRISTIAN. Shall I speak unto my Lord sith I am dust & ashes?

ashes? If I esteem better of my self, behold thou standest against me, and my iniquities bear true witnesse *against me*: neither can I speak against it. But if I abase and esteem nothing of my self, and cast off all self-esteem, and (as I am) account my self to be dust; thy grace will be favourable unto me, and thy light will be near unto my heart; and all self-esteem, how little soever, shall be swallowed up in the deep valley of my nothingnesse, and perish everlastingly. There thou shewest my self unto me, what I am, what I have been, & whither I am come; for I am nothing, and I knew it not. And if I be left to my self, behold I become nothing but mere weakenesse. But if thou suddenly look upon me, I am presently made strong, and filled with new joy. And it is a great marvell, that I am so suddenly lifted up, and so graciously imbraced by thee, that of mine own weight alwaies sink downward.

2. Thy

2. Thy love is cauſe hereof, freely preventing me, and relieving me in ſo many neceſſities, preſerving me alſo from grievous dangers, and delivering me (as I may truly ſay) from innumerable evils. For ſurely by inordinate loving my ſelf, I loſt my ſelf: and by ſeeking thee alone, & purely loving thee, I have found both my ſelf and thee, and by that love have more deeply brought my ſelf to nothing. For that thou, O moſt ſweet Lord, dealeſt with me above all deſert, and above all that I dare hope and requeſt.

3. Bleſſed be thou my God; for although I be unworthy of any benefits, yet the nobleneſſe of thy bountie and thy infinite goodneſſe never ceaſeth to do good even to the ungratefull, and to them that be turned away far from thee. Turn us unto thee, O Lord, that we may be thankfull, humble, and holy; for thou art our ſafetie, our power and our ſtrength.

CHAP. IX.

That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the last end.

CHRIST. Sonne, I ought to be thy chiefest and last end, if thou desirest to be truly blessed. With this intention thy affection shall be purified which is oftentimes inclined inordinately to it self and unto creatures. For if in any thing thou seekest thy self, thou presently faintest and driest up within thy self. Referre therefore all things chiefly unto me, for I am he that have given all. Consider every thing as flowing from the highest good; and therefore all things are to be reduced unto me as unto their Originall.

2. Out of me, as out of a living fountain, the little and the great, the poor and the rich, do draw the water of life: and they that willingly and freely serve me, shall receive grace for grace. But he that will glorie out of me, or be delighted

lighted in any particular good, ſhall not be grounded in true joy, nor enlarged in his heart, but ſhall be many waies encumbred and ſtraitned. Thou oughteſt therefore to aſcribe nothing of good unto thy ſelf, nor attribute goodneſſe unto any man: but give all unto God, without whom man hath nothing. I have beſtowed all, and will that all be returned to me again: and with great ſtrictneſſe I require thanks.

3. This is the truth that putteth to flight vain glory. And if heavenly grace and true love enter in, there ſhall be no envie nor ſtraitneſſe of heart, neither ſhall there be any place for ſelf-love. For divine love overcometh all, and enlargeth all the powers of the ſoul. If thou beeſt truly wiſe, in me alone thou wilt rejoyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: for none is good, but God alone, who is to be praiſed above all things, and to be bleſſed in all.

Chap. X.

That the world being despised, it is a sweet thing to serve God.

CHRISTIAN. Now I will speak again, O Lord, and will not be silent, I will say in the eares of my God, my Lord, and my King that is on high, *Psal.* 31. *O how great is the abundance of thy goodnesse O Lord, which thou hast laid up for those that fear thee!* But what art thou to them that love thee? What to them that serve thee with their whole heart? Truly unspeakable is the sweetnesse of contemplating thee, which thou bestowest on them that love thee. In this chiefly thou hast shewed me the sweetnesse of thy love, for that when I was not, thou madest me; and when I went astray far off from thee, thou broughtest me back again, that I might serve thee, and hast commanded me to love thee.

2. O fountain of everlasting love, what shall I say of thee? How

can I forget thee, that haſt vouchſafed to remember me, even when I waſted away, and periſhed? Thou haſt ſhewed mercie to thy ſervant beyond all my expectation: and haſt exhibited thy favour & friendſhip beyond all merit. What ſhall I return unto thee for this grace. For it is not granted to every one to forſake all things, to renounce the world, and to undertake a life of religious retiredneſſe. Is it much that I ſhould ſerve thee, whom all creatures are bound to ſerve? It ought not to ſeem much unto me to ſerve thee: but this rather ſeemeth much and marvellous unto me that thou vouchſafeſt to receive into thy ſervice one ſo poor and unworthy, and to joyn him with thy beloved ſervants.

3. Behold, all is thine which I have, and whereby I ſerve thee. And yet contrariwiſe thou rather ſerveſt me then I thee. Behold heaven and earth, which thou haſt created for the ſervice of man, at

read

ready at hand, and do daily perform whatsoever thou dost command; and this is little: yea, thou hast also appointed the Angels to the service of man. But that which excelleth all this, is, that thou thy self hast vouchsafed to serve man, and hast promised to give thy self unto him.

4. What shall I give thee for all these thousands of benefits? I would I could serve thee all the dayes of my life! I would I were able at least for one day, to do thee some worthy service! Thou art truly worthy of all service, of all honour, and everlasting praise. Thou art truly my Lord, and I thy poor servant, that am bound to serve thee with all my might, neither ought I ever to be weary of praising thee. And this I wish to do, this I desire: and whatsoever is wanting unto me, vouchsafe I beseech thee to supply.

5. It is a great honour, a great glory to serve thee, and despise all things

things for thee. For great grace ſhall be given to them that ſhall willingly ſubject themſelves to thy moſt holy ſervice. They ſhall receive the moſt ſweet comfort of the holy Ghoſt, that for thy love ſhall renounce all carnall delights. They ſhall attain great freedome of mind, that for thy names ſake ſhall enter into the narrow way, & ſhall have left off all worldly care.

6. O ſweet and delightfull ſervice of God, by which man is truly made free and holy! O ſacred ſtate of religious employment, which maketh man equall to Angels, pleaſing to God, terrible to devils, gratefull and of great eſteem to all the faithfull! O ſervice to be imbraced and alwayes wiſhed for, by which we obtain the greateſt good, and attain to that joy which never ſhall have end!

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

That the desires of our heart are to be examined and moderated.

CHRIST. Son, thou oughtest to learn many things more, which thou hast not well learned.

CHRISTIAN. What are those Lord?

CHRIST. That thou frame thy desires wholly according to my pleasure; and be not a lover of thy self, but an affectionate follower of my will. Thy desires oftentimes enflame thee, and drive thee forwards with violence: but consider whether thou art moved rather for my honour, then for thine own profit. If I be the cause, thou wilt be well content with whatsoever I shall ordain: but if there lurk in thee any self-seeking, behold this is it that hindereth thee and weigheth thee down.

2. Beware therefore thou lean not too much upon thy own preconceived desire, without asking my counsell, lest perhaps afterwards it

it repent thee, and thou begin now to dislike that which before did please thee, and which thou earnestly desiredst as the best. For every affection that seemeth good is not presently to be followed: nor every contrary affection at the first to be avoided. It is expedient sometimes to use a restraint even in good desires and endeavours, lest by importunity thou incurre distraction of mind, and by thy want of self-government beget a scandall unto others; or being gainsaid by others, thou be suddenly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou oughtest to use violence, and resist manfully thy sensuall appetites, and respect not what the flesh would, or would not; but rather to labour that even perforce it be subject to the spirit. And it is to be chastised so long, and to be forced under servitude, untill it readily obey in all things, and learn to be content with a little, and to be pleased with plain things, and not to murmure

mure against any inconvenience.

CHAP. XII.

Of Patience, and of striving against concupiscence.

CHRISTIAN. Lord God, I perceive patience is very necessary unto me; for that many adversities do happen in this life. For howsoever I shall dispose of my peace, my life cannot be without war and affliction.

CHRIST. So it is Son. And my will is not that thou seek after that peace which is void of temptations, or that which feeleth no contrariety; but then think that thou hast found peace, when thou art exercised with sundry tribulations, and tried in many adversities.

2. If thou say, that thou art not able to suffer much, how then wilt thou endure the fire hereafter? of two evils the lesse is alwayes to be chosen. That thou maist therefore avoid everlasting punishment in the next world, endeavour to suffer patiently for God the present evils

of

of this. Doeſt thou think that the men of this world ſuffer little or nothing? Look into the life even of them that live in greateſt delicacies, and thou ſhalt find it otherwiſe. But thou wilt ſay. They have many delights, and follow their own wills, and therefore they make ſmall account of their tribulations: Be it ſo, that they have whatſoever they will; but how long doſt thou think it will laſt?

3. Behold, the wealthy of this world vaniſh away like ſmoke, and there ſhall be no memory of their joyes paſt. Yea, even while they live alſo, they reſt not in them without bitterneſſe, irkſomeneſſe and fear. For the ſelf-ſame thing in which they take their delight, is oftentimes unto them the cauſe of ſorrow. They have their deſert, who for that they inordinately ſeek and follow delights, they do not enjoy them but with ſhame and ſorrow.

4. O how ſhort and falſe: how inor-

inordinate and filthy are all those pleasures! Yet so drunken and blind are men that they understand it not: but like dumb beasts, for a little pleasure of a corruptible life they incurre the *eternall* death of their soul. Do not thou therefore my Son, go after thy lusts, but forsake thine own will. *Psal.* 37. *Delight in the Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thy heart.*

5. For if thou desire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me; behold, in the contempt of all worldly things, and in the cutting off all base delights shall be thy blessing, and abundant comforts shall be given thee. And how much the more thou withdraweſt thy self from all comfort of creatures, so much the sweeter and more powerfull consolations shalt thou find in me. But at first thou canst not attain unto them without some sorrow, nor without a laborious conflict. Thy old custome will make resistance, and

and thou must overcome it with another custome that is better. Thy flesh will murmure; but thou must bridle it with fervour of spirit. The old serpent will sting and trouble thee: but by prayer he shall be put to flight, and by profitable industry thou shalt stop the way against him.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the humble obedience of a subject, according to the example of Christ.

CHRIST. Son, he that endeavoureth to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraweth himself from grace. And he that seeketh things private, shall loose the publick. He that doth not willingly and freely submit himself to his Superiour, it is a signe that his flesh is not as yet perfectly obedient unto him, but oftentimes kicketh and murmureth against him. Learn therefore readily to submit thy self to thy Superiour, if thou desirest to subdue thine own flesh. For the out-

outward enemy is sooner ove
come, if the inward man be no
wasted. There is no worse enem
nor more troublesome to the soul
then thou art unto thy self, not a
greeing well with the spirit. Tho
must of necessity have a true co
tempt of thy self, if thou wilt pre
vail against flesh and bloud.

2. Because thou lovest thy sel
as yet too inordinately, therefor
thou art afraid to resigne thy sel
wholly to the will of others. But
what great matter is it, if thou, tha
art dust & nothing, submit thy sel
to a man for God, when I the Al-
mighty & highest Sovereign who
created all things of nothing, hum-
bly submitted my self unto man for
thee? I became the most humble &
abject of all men, that thou might-
est overcome thy pride with my hu-
mility. Learn to obey thou that art
dust. Learn to humble thy self thou
earth and clay, and put thy self un-
der the feet of all men. Learn to
break thine own will, and to
yield

ield thy ſelf to all ſubjection.
3. Be vehement againſt thy ſelf,
nd ſuffer not pride to live in thee:
ut ſo humble and ſubmit thy ſelf
o all, that every one may go over
hee, and tread thee as dirt of the
reets under their feet. Vain man,
what canſt thou complain of? what
anſt thou anſwer, foul ſinner, to
hem that reprove thee, who haſt
o often offended God, and ſo ma-
y times deſerved hell? But mine
ye hath ſpared thee, becauſe thy
ſoul was precious in my ſight; that
thou mighteſt know my love, and
alwaies remain thankfull for my
benefits; and that thou mighteſt
continually give thy ſelf to true
ſubjection and humility, and migh-
teſt bear patiently the contempt of
thy ſelf.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the ſecret judgements of God to be conſidered, leſt we be extolled in our good deeds.

CHRISTIAN. Thou thundereſt forth thy judgements over me,

O Lord, and shakest all my bones with fear and trembling, and my soul is sore afraid. I stand astonished, when I consider that the heavens are not pure in thy sight, if thou hast found wickedness in Angels, and hast not pardoned them, what shall become of me? Stars fell from heaven, and what do I presume that am dust? They whose works seemed commendable, fell into the lowest misery: and I have seen them, that did eat the bread of Angels, to be delighted with the husks of swine.

2. There is therefore no sanctity, if thou, O Lord, withdrawest thy hand. No wisdome availeth, if thou ceasest to govern. No strength helpeth, if thou leavest to defend. No chastity is secure, if thou doest not protect it. No custody of our own profitable, if thy sacred watchfulness be not present. For, if we be left of thee, we sink and perish: but if thou vouchsafest to visit us, we are raised up and live. We are in-

inconſtant, but by thee we are eſtabliſhed: we wax cold, but by thee we are enflamed.

3. O how meanly and humbly ought I to think of my ſelf! how little, yea nothing ought I to eſteem it, if I ſeem to have any good! O Lord with what profound humility ought I to ſubmit my ſelf to thy bottomleſſe Iudgements: where I find my ſelf to be nothing elſe, but nothing, and nothing! O unmeaſurable weight! O ſea that can never be paſſed over, where I find my ſelf only and wholly nothing! Where then is the lurking hole of glory? Where is the confidence conceived of virtue? All vainglorying is ſwallowed up in the deep of thy judgements over me.

4. What is all fleſh in thy ſight? Shall the clay glory againſt him that frameth it? How can he be lifted up with vain words, whoſe heart is truly ſubject to God? All the world cannot lift him up, whom the Truth hath ſubjected unto

unto it self? neither shall he be moved with the tongues of all his praisers, that hath settled his whole hope in God. For as for them that speak, behold, they all are nothing: they shall passe away with the sound of their words: but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.

Chap. XV.

How we are to stand affected, and what we are to say, in every thing which we desire.

CHRIST. Son, say thus in every thing, Lord, if it be pleasing unto thee, let this be done in this sort; Lord, if it be to thy honour, let this be done in thy name; Lord, if thou seest it expedient for me, and allowest it to be profitable, then grant unto me, that I may use this unto thine honour. But if thou knowest it will be hurtfull unto me, and not profitable to the health of my soul, take away this desire from me. For every desire proceedeth not from the holy Ghost, though it seem unto man right and good.

good. It is hard to judge rightly whether a good Spirit or the contrary drive thee to desire this or that; or whether also by thine own spirit thou be moved thereunto. Many are deceived in the end, who at the first seemed to be led by a good Spirit.

2. Alwayes therefore, whatsoever occurreth unto thy mind to be desired, let it be desired and prayed for in the fear of God and with humility of heart: and above all thou oughtest to commit the whole unto me with resignation of thy self, and thou oughtest to say, Lord thou knowest what is best, let this or that be done as thou pleasest. Give what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt. Deal with me as thou thinkest good, and as best pleaseth thee, and is most for thy honour. Set me where thou wilt, and deal with me in all things according to thy will. I am in thy hand; turn me, and turn me again which way soever

thou pleaſe. Behold I am thy ſervant, prepared for all things: for I deſire not to live unto my ſelf, but unto thee: and O that I could do it worthily and perfectly!

A Prayer for the fulfilling of the will of God.

3. Grant me thy grace O moſt gracious Ieſus, that it may be with me, and labour with me, and perſevere with me untill the end. Grant me alwayes to deſire and will that which is moſt acceptable unto thee, and beſt pleaſeth thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will ever follow thine, and agree perfectly with it. Let my will and nill be all one with thine, and let me not will or nill any thing elſe, but what thou willeſt or nilleſt.

4. Grant that I may die to all things that are in the world, and to love to be contemned for thy ſake, and not to be known in this world. Grant that above all things that can be deſired, I may reſt in thee, and may quiet my heart in

thee. Thou art the true peace of the heart, thou art the only rest; out of thee all things are troublesome and unquiet. In this very peace, that is, in thee, the one chiefest eternall Good, I will sleep and rest. Amen.

CHAP. XVI.

That true comfort is to be sought in God alone.

WHatsoever I can desire or imagine for my comfort, I look not for it here, but hereafter. For if I should alone have all the comforts of the world, and might enjoy all the delights thereof, it is certain that they could not long endure. Wherefore my soul, thou canst not be fully comforted, nor have perfect delight but in God, the comforter of the poor, and the helper of the humble. Expect a while, O my soul, expect the divine promise, and thou shalt have abundance of all good things in heaven. If thou desire inordinately the things that are present, thou shalt lose the ce-

leſtiall and eternall. Uſe temporall things, and deſire eternall. Thou canſt not be filled with any temporall goods, becauſe thou art not created to enjoy them.

2. Although thou ſhouldſt enjoy all created good; yet couldſt thou not be happy thereby nor bleſſed; but in God, that hath created all things, thy whole beatitude and happineſſe conſiſteth; not ſuch as is ſeen, and commended by the fooliſh lovers of the world, but ſuch as the good and faithfull ſervants of Chriſt expect, and the ſpirituall and pure in heart, whoſe converſation is in heaven, ſometimes have a fore-taſte of. Vain and ſhort is all humane comfort. Bleſſed and true is the comfort which is received inwardly from the Truth. A Religious man every where carrieth with him Ieſus his comforter, and ſaith unto him, Be preſent with me Lord Ieſus, in every place and time. Let this be my comfort, to be willing to want all hu-

humane comfort. And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will and juſt proving of me be unto me as the greateſt comfort: for thou wilt not be angry alwayes, neither wilt thou threaten for ever.

CHAP. XVII.

That all our care is to be placed in God.

CHRIST. Son, ſuffer me to doe with the what I pleaſe. I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkeſt as man; thou judgeſt in many things as humane affection perſwadeth thee.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, what thou ſayeſt is true. Thy care for me is greater then all the care that I can take for my ſelf. For he ſtandeth very totteringly, that caſteth not his whole care upon thee. Lord, ſo that my will may remain right and firm towards thee, do with me whatſoever it ſhall pleaſe thee. For it cannot be but good whatſo-

ever thou doest with me.

2. If it be thy will I should be in darkneſſe, be thou bleſſed: and if it be thy will I should be in light, be thou again bleſſed. If thou vouchſafeſt to comfort me, be thou bleſſed: and if thou wilt afflict me, be thou ever equally bleſſed.

CHRIST. Sonne, Thus thou oughteſt to be minded, if thou wilt walk with me, Thou muſt be as ready to ſuffer, as to rejoyce. Thou oughteſt to be as willing to be poor and needy, as full and rich.

3. CHRISTIAN. Lord, I will willingly ſuffer for thee, whatſoever thy pleaſure is ſhall befall me. I will receive indifferently from thy hand good and evil, ſweet and ſowre, delightfull and ſorrowfull; and give thee thanks for all that befalleth me. Keep me from all ſinne, and I will neither fear death nor hell: ſo as thou doſt not for ever caſt me from thee, nor blot me out of the book of life,

what

what tribulations soever befall me shall not hurt me.

CHAP. XVIII.

That temporall miseries, after the example of Christ, must be born patiently.

CHRIST. Sonne, I descended from Heaven for thy Salvation: I took upon me thy miseries, my own love and not any necessity drawing me thereunto; that thou mightest learn patience, and not grudgingly bear temporall miseries. For from the hour of my birth, untill my death on the crosse, I was not without suffering of grief. I suffered great want of temporall things: I often heard many complaints against me: I bare patiently shame and reproches: for benefits I received ingratitude; for miracles, blasphemies: for heavenly doctrine, reprehensions.

2. CHRISTIAN. Lord,

for that thou wert patient in thy life-time, chiefly fulfilling herein the commandment of thy Father, it is reason that I a miserable sinner should shew my self patient according to thy will, and for my soul's well-fare bear the burden of this corruptible life as long as thou wilt. For although this present life be burdensome, yet notwithstanding it is now by thy grace made very gainfull; and by thy example and the footsteps of thy Saints, more plain and tolerable to the weak. Yea, much more comfortable also then it was in times past in the old Law, when the gate of heaven remained shut, and the way also to heaven seemed darker, when so few took care to seek after thy Kingdome. Neither they also that then were just and such as should be saved, could enter into the heavenly Kingdome, before the satisfaction of thy holy passion and death.

3. O how many and great thanks

thanks am I bound to render unto thee, that thou haſt vouchſafed to ſhew unto me and to all the faithfull a direct and ſure way to thy everlaſting Kingdome! For thy life is our way, and by holy patience we go unto thee that art our Crown. If thou hadſt not gone before us and taught us, who would have taken care to follow? Alas! how many would ſtay behind and remain farre off, if they beheld not thy noble example! Behold we are yet cold, although we have heard of ſo many of thy wonders, and thy *heavenly* documents: what would become of us, if we had not ſo great a light *given us* to follow thee?

CHAP. XIX.

Of ſuffering of injuries: and who is proved to be truly patient.

CHRIST. What is it thou ſayeſt, Sonne? Ceaſe to com-

plain, considering my passion, and that of my other Saints. Thou hast not yet made resistance unto bloud. It is but little thou sufferest, in comparison of them that have suffered so much, were so strongly tempted, so grievously afflicted, so many wayes tried and exercised. Thou oughtest therefore to call to mind the more heavy sufferings of others, that thou mayest the easier bear the little adversities which thou sufferest. And if they seem not little unto thee; beware lest thy impatience be cause thereof. Yet whether they be little or great, endeavour to bear all patiently.

2. How much the better thou disposest thy self to suffering, so much the more wisely thou doest, and so much the greater reward shalt thou receive: thou shalt more easily also endure it, if both in mind and by exercise thou art well prepared thereunto. Do not say, I cannot suffer these things at the

the hands of such a person, nor, such things are not to be suffered by me; for he hath done me great wrong, and upbraided me with those things which I never thought of: but of another I will willingly suffer, and as I shall see cause. Such a thought is foolish; it considereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned; but rather weigheth the persons, and the injuries offered.

3. He is not truly patient, that will not suffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whom he listeth. But the true patient man mindeth not by whom he is exercised; whether by his Superiours, or some of his equals, or by his inferiours: whether by a good and holy man, or by a perverse and unworthy person. But indifferently from all creatures, how much soever, or how often soever any adversitie befalleth him, he taketh all this thankfully as from the hand of God, and esteemeth it a grea

gain

gain: for that nothing before God, how little soever, so it be suffered for God, shall passe without its reward.

4. Be thou therefore alwaies prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have thy victorie. Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience. If thou wilt not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned. But if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently. Without labour there is no coming to rest, nor without fighting can the victorie be obtained.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, let that be made possible to me by thy grace, which seemeth impossible to me by nature. Thou knowest that I can suffer but little, and that I am quickly dismayed, when a small adversity ariseth. Let every exercise of tribulation be made amiable unto me, and be welcome for thy name; for to suffer and to be troubled for thy sake,

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is very profitable for my ſoul.

CHAP. XX.

Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities: and of the miſeries of this life.

CHRISTIAN. I will confeſs againſt me my unrighteouſneſſe, I will confeſſe unto thee, O Lord, my infirmities. Oftentimes it is a ſmall matter that dejecteth and grieveth me, I purpoſe to act with courage, but when a ſmall temptation cometh, it bringeth me into very narrow ſtraits. It is ſometimes a very trifle, from whence great temptations do proceed. And whileſt I think my ſelf ſomewhat ſafe, when I leaſt expect it, I find my ſelf ſometimes overcome with a ſmall blaſt.

2. Behold therefore, Lord, my lowneſſe and frailty every way known unto thee. Have mercy on me and deliver me out of the mire that I ſtick not faſt therein, and

and that I may not for ever remain dejected. This is that which oftentimes strikes me at the very heart, and confounds me in thy sight, for that I am so subject to fall, and weak in resisting of my passions. And although I do not altogether consent, yet their continuall assaults are troublesome & grievous unto me: and it is a very irksome thing to live thus daily in conflict. Hereby my infirmity is made known unto me, for that wicked fancies do alwaies much more easily invade then forsake me.

3. O mighty God of Israel, the zealous lover of faithfull souls, let it please thee to consider the labour and sorrow of thy servant, and assist him in all whatsoever he undertaketh. Strengthen me with heavenly strength, lest the old man, the miserable flesh, not fully as yet subject to the spirit, prevail and get the upper hand; against which I ought to fight as long as I breath in this miserable life. Alas, what

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a kind of life is this, where tribulation and miseries are never wanting! where all is full of snares, and enemies! For when one tribulation or temptation goeth away, another cometh; yea and during the first conflict also, many others come unlooked for one after another.

4. And how can a life be loved that hath so many embitterments, and is subject to so many calamities and miseries? How is it called a life that begetteth so many deaths and plagues? And yet it is loved, and many seek to delight themselves therein. The world is oftentimes blamed that it is deceitfull and vain, and yet it is not easily forsaken, because the desires of the flesh bear so great a sway.

Some things draw us to love it, others to contemn it. To the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life do draw us: but the pains & miseries that do justly follow them, cause a hatred & lothsomness thereof.

5. But

5. But alas! vile pleasure overcometh the mind which is addicted to the world; and she esteemeth it a delight to be even under thorns, because she hath neither seen nor tasted the sweetnesse of God, and the inward pleasantnesse of virtue. But they that perfectly contemne the world, and endeavour to live to God under holy discipline, these are not ignorant of the divine sweetnesse promised to the true forsakers of the world, and do more clearly see how grievously the world erreth, and how it is many wayes deceived.

CHAP. XXI.

That we are to rest in God above all his gifts, and benefits.

CHRISTIAN. Above all things, and in all things, O my soul, thou shalt ever rest in the Lord, for he is the everlasting rest of the Saints. Grant me, O most sweet and loving Iesus, to rest in thee above all creatures, above all health

health and beauty, above all glory and honour, above all power and dignity, above all knowledge and ſubtlety, above all riches and arts, above all joy and gladneſſe, above all fame and praiſe, above all ſweetneſſe and comfort, above all hope and promiſe, above all deſert and deſire, above all gifts and preſents that thou canſt give and impart unto us, above all mirth and jubilee that the mind of man can receive and feel: laſtly, above Angels and Archangels & above all the heavenly hoſt, above all viſible and inviſible things, and above all that thou art not, O my God.

2. For that thou, my Lord God, art beſt of all: thou alone art moſt high, thou alone moſt powerfull, thou alone moſt full and ſufficient, thou alone moſt ſweet and ſolacing, thou alone moſt lovely and loving, thou alone moſt noble and glorious above all things, in whom all good things together both perfectly are, and ever have been,

been, and shall be: and therefore it is too little & not sufficient, whatsoever thou bestowest on me besides thy self, or revealest unto me of thy self, or promisest, whilest thou art not seen, and not fully obtained: for surely my heart cannot truly rest nor be fully contented, unlesse it rest in thee, and surmount all gifts and creatures whatsoever.

3. O my most beloved Bridegroom Iesus Christ, the most pure lover, the governour of all creatures; O that I had the wings of true liberty that I might flie and rest in thee! O when shall it be fully granted me to consider in quietnesse of mind and see how sweet thou art, my Lord God! When shall I fully gather up my self into thee, that by reason of my love to thee I may not feel my self, but thee alone, above all sense and feeling, in a manner not known unto every one! But now I oftentimes sigh, and bear my infelicity with

with grief; for that many evils occurre in this vale of miseries, which do often trouble, grieve, and overcloud me; often hinder and distract me, allure and intangle me, so that I can have no free accesse unto thee, nor enjoy thy sweet embracings wherewith thou ever favourest the blessed Spirits. O let my sighs and manifold desolations on earth affect thee.

4. O Iesus, the brightnesse of eternall glory, and comfort of the pilgrime soul, with thee is my tongue without voice, and my very silence speaketh unto thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come? Let him come unto me his poor servant, and make me glad. Let him put forth his hand and deliver miserable me from all anguish. Come, O come; for without thee I shall have no joyfull day nor hour: for thou art my joy, and without thee my table is empty. A wretched creature I am, and in a manner imprisoned and loaden with

with irons, untill thou comfortest me with the light of thy presence, and settest me at libertie, and shewest a friendly countenance unto me.

5. Let other seek what they please in stead of thee: but for me, nothing else doth nor shall delight me, but thou only my God, my hope, my everlasting salvation. I will not hold my peace, nor cease to pray, untill thy grace return again, and thou speak inwardly unto me.

CHRIST. Behold I am here: behold I come unto thee, because thou hast called upon me. Thy tears and the desire of thy soul, thy humiliation and the contrition of thy heart, have inclined and brought me unto thee.

CHRISTIAN. And I said, Lord, I have called thee, and have desired to enjoy thee, being ready to refuse all things for thee. For thou first hast stirred me up that I might seek thee. Blessed be thou there-

therefore, O Lord, that haſt ſhewed this goodneſſe to thy ſervant, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy ſervant more to ſay before thee, but that he do greatly humble himſelf in thy ſight, alwaies mindfull of his own iniquity, and vileneſſe? For there is none like unto thee in all whatſoever is wonderfull in heaven and earth. Thy works are very good, thy judgements true, and by thy providence all things are governed. Praiſe therefore and glory be unto thee, O wiſdome of the Father: let my mouth, my ſoul, and all creatures together praiſe and bleſſe thee.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God.

CHRISTIAN. Open, O Lord, my heart in thy Law, and teach me to walk in thy Commandments. Grant me to underſtand

ſtand thy will, and to remember thy benefits, as well in generall, as in particular, with great reverence and diligent conſideration; that henceforward I may be able worthily to give thee thanks. But I know, and confeſſe, that I am not able in the leaſt point to give thee due thanks, for the favours which thou beſtoweſt upon me. I am leſſe then the leaſt of all thy benefits: and when I conſider thy noble bounty, the greatneſſe thereof maketh my ſpirit to faint.

2. All that we have in our ſoul and body, and whatſoever we poſſeſſe outwardly or inwardly, naturally or ſupernaturally, are thy benefits, and do ſpeak thee bountifull, merciſull, and good, from whom we have received all good things. Although one have received more, another leſſe; all notwithſtanding are thine, and without thee even the leaſt cannot be had. He that hath received greater, cannot glory of his own deſert, nor extoll

extoll himself above others, nor insult over the lesser: for he is greater and better that ascribeth least unto himself, and is more humble and religious in rendring thanks. And he that esteemeth himself vilest of all men, and judgeth himself most unworthy, is fittest to receive great blessings.

3. And he that hath received fewer, ought not to be sorry nor take it grievously, nor envie them that are enriched with greater store; but attend rather unto thee, and highly praise thy goodnesse, for that thou bestowest thy gifts so bountifully, so freely, and so willingly without respect of persons. All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all things thou art to be praised. Thou knowest what is fit to be given to every one; and why this man hath lesse, and he more, it is not ours, but thine to judge, who dost exactly know what is meet for every one.

4. Wherefore, my Lord God, I esteem

esteem it as a great mercie, not to have much of that which outwardly and in the opinion of men might seem worthy of glory and applause: so that he who considereth the poverty and unworthinesse of his person, ought not therefore to conceive grief or sorrow, or to be therefore troubled, but rather to take great comfort, and to be glad: for that thou O God hast chosen the poore and humble and the despised of this world for thy self, and for thy familiar & domestick attendants. Witnesses are thy Apostles themselves, whom thou hast made Princes in all the earth. And yet they lived without complaint in the world, so humble and simple, without all malice and deceit, that they also rejoyced to suffer reproch for thy name, and what the world abhorreth, they embraced with great affection.

5. Nothing therefore ought so to rejoyce him that loveth thee and acknowledgeth thy benefits, as thy will

will in him, and the good pleasure of thy eternall appointment; wherewith he ought to be so contented and comforted, that he would as willingly be the least, as any would wish to be the greatest, and as peaceable and contented in the last as in the first place: and as willing to be despised and contemned and to be of no esteem or account, as to be preferred in honour before all others and to be greater in the world. For thy will and the love of thy glory ought to be preferred before all things, and to comfort him more, and please him better, then all the benefits which either he hath received or may receive.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of foure things that bring much peace.

CHRIST. Sonne, now I will teach thee the way of peace, & true libertie.

CHRISTIAN. Do Lord, I beseech thee, as thou saist, for

I shall be very glad to hear it.

CHRIST. Endeavour, my Sonne, to do rather the will of another, then thine own. Ever choose rather to have lesse then more. Alwayes seek the lowest place, and to be inferiour to every one. Wish alwayes and pray, that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled in thee. Behold such a man entereth into the bounds of peace and quietnesse.

2. CHRISTIAN. Lord, this thy short speech containeth much perfection. It is little in words, but full in sense, and abundant in fruit. For if it could faithfully be kept by me, then should I not so easily be troubled. For as often as I feel my self unquiet & afflicted, I find that I have strayed from this doctrine. But thou that canst do all things, and ever lovest the profiting of my soul, increase in me thy grace, that I may fulfill thy words, and work out mine own salvation.

3. *A prayer againſt evil thoughts.*

My Lord God, be not farre from me; my God, have regard to help me: for ſundrie thoughts have riſen up againſt me, and great fears, afflicting my ſoul. How ſhall I paſſe through them without hurt? How ſhall I utterly break them?

CHRIST. I, ſaith he *will go before thee, and will humble the great ones of the earth, I will open the doores of the priſon, and reveal unto thee hidden ſecrets.*

CHRISTIAN. Do Lord as thou ſayeſt, and let all my evil thoughts flie from before thy face. This is my hope, my onely comfort, to flie unto thee in every tribulation, to truſt in thee, to call upon thee from my heart, and to expect patiently thy comfort.

A prayer for enlightning of the mind.

4. Enlighten me O good Jeſus, with a clear-ſhining inward light, and drive away all darkneſſe from

the habitation of my heart. Represse my many wandering thoughts, and utterly break in pieces those temptations which violently assault me. Fight strongly for me, and vanquish those evil beasts, I mean those inticing desires of the flesh, that so peace may be obtained by thy power, and that abundance of thy praise may sound in the holy Court of a pure conscience. Command the winds and tempests: say unto the sea, Be still: and to the north wind, blow not; and a great calm shall ensue.

5. Send forth thy light and thy truth, that they may shine upon the earth: for I am as the earth without forme and void, untill thou enlighten me. Pour out thy grace from above, let thy heavenly dew distill upon my heart, supply fresh streams of grace, to water the face of the earth, that it may bring forth good and excellent fruit. Lift up my mind which

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is preſſed down by the weight of ſinnes. Draw up my whole deſire to heavenly things; that having taſted the ſweetneſſe of ſupernall happineſſe, it may be irkſome to me even to think of earthly vanities.

6. Pluck me and deliver me from all the unlaſting comfort of creatures: for no created thing can fully comfort and quiet my deſire. Joyn me unto thee with an unſeparable band of love: for thou even alone doſt ſatisfie him that loveth thee, and without thee all things are vain.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.

CHRIST. Sonne, be not curious, trouble not thy ſelf with idle cares. What is this or that to thee? do thou follow me. For what is it to thee, whether that man be ſuch or no, or whether this man do, or ſpeak this or that? Thou ſhalt not need to anſwer for

others, but shalt give account of thy self. Why therefore dost thou trouble thy self? Behold I know every one, and do see all things that are under the sunne, and do understand how it is with every one; what he thinks, what he would, and at what his intention aimes. All things therefore are to be committed unto me; but do thou keep thy self in good peace, and let the unquiet be as unquiet as they will. Whatsoever they shall have done, or said, shall fall upon themselves, for they cannot deceive me.

2. Be not carefull for the shadow of a great name, or for the familiarity of many; nor for the private affection of men: for these things both distract and greatly darken the heart. I would willingly utter my words, and reveal my secrets unto thee, if thou didst diligently observe my coming, and didst open the door of thy heart unto me. Be carefull and watch in prayer,

prayer, and humble thy self in all things

CHAP. XXV.

Wherein the firm peace of the heart, and true spirituall profiting consisteth?

CHRIST. Sonne, I have said, *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* All do desire peace, but all care not for those things that appertain unto true peace. My peace is with the humble and meek of heart. Thy peace doth consist in much patience. If thou wilt hear me and follow my voice, thou maist enjoy much peace.

CHRISTIAN. What then shall I do, Lord?

CHRIST. In every thing attend unto thy self what thou doest, and what thou sayest: and direct thy whole intention unto this, that thou maist please me alone, and desire or seek nothing besides me. Of the sayings and doings of others judge nothing rashly: nei-

ther do thou intangle thy self with things not committed unto thee: and doing thus, thou shalt be little or seldome troubled.

2. But never to feel any trouble at all, nor to suffer any grief of heart or body, is not the state of this life, but of everlasting rest. Think not therefore that thou hast found true peace, if thou feelest no sorrow; nor that then all is well, if thou have no adversary; nor that all is perfect, if all things be done according to thy desire. Neither do thou then esteem highly of thy self, or account thy self to be specially beloved, if thou be in great devotion and sweetnesse: for by these things a true lover of virtue is not known; neither doth the profiting and perfection of a man consist in these things.

3. CHRISTIAN. Wherein then Lord?

CHRIST. In offering thy self with all thy heart unto the will of God,

God, not seeking thing own interest, neither in great not little, neither for a time nor for ever, so that thou keepest one and the same countenance with thanksgiving, both in prosperity and in adversity, weighing all things with an equall ballance. If thou be of such courage and so patient in hope, that when inward comfort is withdrawn from thee, thou prepareſt thy heart to suffer greater things; and doest not justifie thy self, as though thou oughtest not to suffer these and so great afflictions; but justifiest me in whatsoever I appoint, and praisest my holy name; then thou walkest in the true and right way of peace: and thou shalt have undoubted hope to see my face again with great joy. And if thou attain to the full contempt of thy self; then shalt thou enjoy as great abundance of peace, as this thy state of sojourning in this world is capable of.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the excellency of a free mind, which humble Prayer sooner gaineth then Reading.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, it is the work of a perfect man, never to slack his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and as it were to passe without care amongst many cares; not like a dull sluggard; but by the privi-ledge of a free mind, adhering to no creature with inordinate affe-ction.

2. I beseech thee, my most gra-cious God, preserve me from the cares of this life, lest I should be too much intangled thereby: and from the many necessities of the body, lest I should be caught by pleasure: & from whatsoever is an obstacle to the soul, lest broken with troubles I should be over-thrown. I say not from those things that worldly vanity so greatly desireth: but from those miseries, that as punishments &

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as the common curse of mortality, do weigh down and hinder the soul of thy servant, that it cannot enter into freedome of spirit, as often as it would.

3. O my God, the ineffable sweetnesse, embitter unto me all carnall comfort, which may draw me away from the love of eternall things, and may wickedly allure me to it self by the beholding of some present delightsome good. Let me not be overcome, O Lord, let me not be overcome by flesh and bloud. Let not the world and the short glory thereof deceive me. Let not the Devil & his subtil fraud supplant me. Give me strength to resist, patience to suffer, and constancie to persevere. Give me in stead of all the comforts of the world, the most sweet unction of thy Spirit, and in lieu of carnall love poure into my soul the love of thy name.

4. Behold, meat, drink, clothes & other necessaries for the maintenanc

tenance of the body, are burdensome unto a fervent spirit. Grant me to use such refreshments moderately, and not to be intangled with an over great desire of them. It is not lawfull to cast away all things for that nature is to be sustained: but to desire superfluities, and those things that are rather pleasurable, thy holy law forbiddeth: for otherwise the flesh would rebell against the spirit. Herein, I beseech thee, let thy hand govern me, and teach me, that I may not exceed.

CHAP. XXVII.

That private love most hindereth from the chiefest Good.

CHRIST. Sonne, thou oughtest to give all for all, and to retain nothing of thy self. Know, that the love of thy self doth hurt thee more then any thing in the world. According to the love & affection thou beareſt them, so doth every thing cleave unto thee more or lesse. If thy love be pure, simple, & well

well ordered, thou shalt be free from the bondage of things. Covet not that which thou maiest not have. Be not willing to have that which may hinder thee & deprive thee of inward liberty. It is strange that thou committest not thy self wholly unto me, from the bottome of thy heart; with all things that thou canst desire or have.

2. Why dost thou consume thy self with vain grief? Why art thou tired with needlesse cares stand to my good will, & thou shalt suffer no detriment at all. If thou seekest this or that, & wouldest be here or there, to enjoy thine own commoditie & pleasure; thou shalt never be at quiet, nor free from trouble of mind: for in every thing somewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be some that will crosse thee.

3. Not every externall thing therefore attained and heaped together helpeth thee, but it rather availeth, if thou despise it, & dost utterly

utterly root it out from thy heart; which thou must not understand onely of thy revenues and wealth, but of thy seeking after honour also, and thy desire of vain praise; all which do passe away with this world. The place availeth little, if the spirit of fervour be wanting; neither shall that peace which is sought abroad long continue, if the state of thy heart be destitute of a true foundation: that is, unlesse thou stand stedfast in me, thou maiest change, but not better thy self. For when occasion doth happen, thou shalt find not onely those things which thou soughtest to flie, but a great deale more.

A prayer for purging the heart, and obtaining of heavenly wisdome.

4. CHRISTIAN. Strengthen me, O God, by the grace of thy holy Spirit. Give me to be strengthened in my inward man, and to empty my heart of all unprofitable care and anguish; not to

to be drawn away with the ſundry deſires of any thing either mean or precious, but to look upon all things as paſſing away, and that my ſelf do alſo paſſe away together with them: for nothing is permanent under the ſunne, where all things are vanity and vexation of ſpirit. O how wiſe is he that ſo conſidereth them!

5. Grant me, Lord, heavenly wiſdome, that I may learn above all things to ſeek and find thee, above all things to reliſh thee, and to love thee, and to think of all other things as they are, according to the diſpoſall of thy wiſdome. Grant me prudently to avoid him that flatters me, and to ſuffer patiently him that contradicts me. For it is a great part of wiſdome not to be moved with every blaſt of words; nor to give eare to an ill flattering *Siren*; for ſo we ſhall go on ſecurely in the way which we have begun.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Against the tongues of Slanderers.

CHRIST. Sonne, take it not grievously if some think evil of thee, and speak that which thou wouldst not willingly hear. Thou oughtest to judge the worst of thy self, and to think no man weaker then thy self. If thou doest walk spiritually, thou wilt not much esteem of flying words. It is no small wisdome to keep silence in an evil time, and inwardly to turn to me, and not to be troubled with the judgement of men.

2. Let not thy peace be in the tongues of men. For whether they interpret well or evil, thou art not therefore another man. Where is true peace, and true glorie? Is it not in me? And he that coveteth not to please men, nor feareth to displease them, shall enjoy much peace. From inordinate love and vain fear ariseth all disquietnesse of heart and distraction of the mind.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

How we ought to call upon God, and bleſſe him when tribulation draweth near.

CHRISTIAN. Bleſſed (O Lord) be thy name for ever; ſince it pleaſeth thee that this temptation and tribulation ſhould come upon me. I cannot flie it, but have need to flie to thee, that thou maieſt help me, and turn it to my good. Lord I am now afflicted, and it is not well with me. I am much troubled with this preſent ſuffering. And now, dear Father, what ſhall I ſay? I am caught amidſt ſtraits, ſave me from this houre. Yet therefore came I into this houre, that thou maieſt be glorified, when I ſhall be greatly humbled, and by thee delivered. Let it pleaſe thee Lord, to deliver me: for, poor wretch that I am, what can I doe, and whither ſhall I go without thee? Grant patience Lord, even this time alſo.

Help

Help me my God, and then I will not fear how grievously soever I be afflicted.

2. And now in these my troubles what shall I say? Lord, thy will be done; I have well deserved to be afflicted & grieved. Surely I ought to bear it: and O that I could bear it with patience, untill the tempest be passed over, and it become calm! But thy omnipotent hand is able to take even this temptation from me, and to asswage the violence thereof, that I utterly sink not under it, as oftentimes heretofore thou hast done unto me, O my God, My Mercie. And how much the more hard is it to me, so much the more easie is this *change of the right hand of the most High.*

CHAP. XXX.

Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.

CHRIST. Son, I am the Lord that giveth strength in the day of tribulation. Come unto me when

hen it is not well with thee. This that which moſt of all hindreth avenly conſolation, that thou t ſlow in turning thy ſelf unto ayer. For before thou doſt earneſtly pray unto me, thou ſeekeſt in the mean while many comforts, nd delighteſt thy ſelf in outward hings. And hence it comes to paſſe that all doth little profit thee, ntill thou conſider that I am he hat deliver thoſe that truſt in me: nd that out of me there is neither owerfull help, nor profitable ounſell, nor laſting remedie. But ow thou having recovered breath fter the tempeſt, gather ſtrength gain in the light of my mercies: for I am at hand, ſaith the Lord, to repair all, not only entirely, but alſo abundantly & in a very plentifull meaſure.

2. Is there any thing hard to me? Or am I like unto him that promiſeth and performeth not? Where is thy faith? Be firm and conſtant. Take courage and be patient;

tient; comfort will come to the in due time. Wait, wait for me, will come and heal thee. It is temptation that vexeth thee, a vain fear that affrighteth thee. What else doth the care for future contingencies bring thee, but sorrow upon sorrow? *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof* It is a vain and unprofitable thing to be grieved, or to rejoyce for future things, that perhaps will never come to passe.

3. But it is incident to man, to be deluded with such imaginations: and a signe of a weak mind to be so easily drawn away by the suggestion of the enemy. For he careth not so he delude and deceive thee, whether it be true or false which he proposeth: whether he overthrow thee with the love of present, or the fear of future things. Let not therefore thy heart be troubled, neither let it fear. Believe in me, and put thy trust in my mercy. When thou thinkest thy

thy self furtheſt off from me, oftentimes I am neareſt unto thee. When thou judgeſt that almoſt all is loſt, then oftentimes the greateſt advantage of gaining is at hand. All is not loſt when any thing falleth out contrary. Thou muſt not judge according to that which thou feeleſt for the preſent: nor ſo take, or give thy ſelf over to, any grief from whence ſoever it cometh as though all hope of delivery were quite gone.

4. Think not thy ſelf wholly left, although for a time I have ſent thee ſome tribulation, or withdrawn thy deſired comfort: for this is the way to the kingdome of heaven. And without doubt it is more expedient for thee and the reſt of my ſervants, that ye be exerciſed with adverſities, then that ye ſhould have all things according to your deſires. I know the ſecret thoughts of thy heart, and that it is very expedient for thy wellfare, that thou be leſt ſometimes

times without taste *of spiritual sweetneſse, and in a dry condition* le
perhaps thou ſhouldeſt be puff
up with thy proſperous eſtate, an
ſhouldeſt pleaſe thy ſelf in th
which thou art not. That which
have given I can take away; and
reſtore it again when I pleaſe.

5. When I give it, it is mine;
when I withdraw it, I take not any
thing that is thine; for mine is e-
very good and every perfect gift.
If I ſend thee affliction, or any
Croſſe whatſoever, repine not,
nor let thy heart fail thee: I can
quickly ſuccour thee; and turn all
thy heavineſſe into joy. Neverthe-
leſſe I am righteous, and greatly
to be praiſed, when I deal thus
with thee.

6. If thou be wiſe, and conſide-
reſt this rightly, thou wilt never
mourn ſo dejectedly for any adver-
ſity that befalleth thee, but rather
rejoyce and give thanks; yea, ac-
count this thy only joy, that affli-
cting thee with ſorrows, I do not
ſpare

ſpare thee. *As my Father hath loved me, I alſo love you*, ſaid I unto my beloved Diſciples; whom certainly I ſent not out to temporall joyes, but to great conflicts: not to honours; but to contempts: not to idleneſſe, but to labours: not to reſt, but to bring forth much fruit with patience. My Son, remember theſe words.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the contempt of all creatures, to find out the Creatour.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, I ſtand in need of yet greater grace, that I may reach to that pitch, as that nor man nor any creature may be a let unto me. For as long as any thing detains me, I cannot freely take my flight unto thee. He deſired to flie freely that ſaid, *Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will flie and be at reſt?* What thing more quiet then the ſingle eye? And what more free, then he

he that desireth nothing upo earth? Man ought therefore t passe over all creatures, and pe fectly to forsake himself, and t remain in excesse of mind, and t see that thou the Creatour o all things, hast nothing a mongst creatures like unto thee And unlesse a man be freed fro *the affection of* all creatures, he can not with freedome of mind attend unto divine things. And for thi cause there are so few contempla tive men to be found, for that fe can wholly withdraw themselves from things created and perishing.

2. But to do this there is need of much grace which may raise up the soul, and enravish it above it self. And unlesse a man be raised up in spirit, and freed from all creatures, and wholly united unto God; whatsoever he knoweth, and whatsoever he hath, is of little account. A long while shall he be little, and lie grovelling below, that esteemeth any thing great, but the

the one only infinite and eternall Good. For whatsoever is not God, is nothing, and ought to be accounted as nothing. There is great difference between the wisdome of an illuminated and religious man, and the knowledge of a learned & studious Clerk. Farre more noble is that learning which floweth from above from the divine influence, then that which is painfully gotten by the wit of man.

3. There are many that desire contemplation, but they endeavour not to practise those things that are required thereunto. Another great let is this, that we rest in signes and sensible things, and take little care about the perfect mortification of our selves. I know not what it is, nor by what spirit we are led, nor what we pretend, we that seem to be called spirituall, that we take so much pains and so great care for transitory and low things; & scarce or seldome think of our own inward concernments,

with the full recollection of our minds.

4. Alas, presently after a slight recollection, we break out again, and weigh not our words with diligent examination. We mind not where our affections lie; nor bewail the impurity that is in all our actions. For all flesh had corrupted his way, and therefore did that generall floud ensue. Sith our inward affection then is much corrupted, it must needs be that our actions proceeding thence be corrupted, as a sign of the want of inward vigour. From a pure heart proceedeth the fruit of a good life.

5. We ask how much one hath done; but how virtuously or vigorously it was done, is not so diligently considered. We inquire whether he be strong, rich, beautifull, handsome, a good writer, a good singer, or a good labourer: but how poor he is in spirit, how patient and meek, how religious and spirituall, is seldome spoken of.

of. Nature respecteth the outward things of man, Grace turneth it self to the inward. That is often deceived: This hath her trust in God, to the end she be not deceived.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of deniall of our selves, and forsaking all inordinate desires.

CHRIST. Sonne, thou canst not possesse perfect liberty, unlesse thou wholly deny thy self. All such are fettred *and in bondage* as seek their proper interest wholly, and are lovers of themselves, covetous, curious, wanderers, alwaies seeking pleasure, and not the things of Iesus Christ; but oftentimes devising and framing that which will not continue; for all that is not of God shall perish. Keep this short and compleat saying: *Forsake all, and thou shalt find all. Leave thy inordinate desires, and thou shalt find rest.* Consider this well: and when thou hast fulfilled it, thou shalt understand all.

2. CHRISTIAN. Lord, this is not one daies work, nor childrens sport: yea, in this short word all the perfection of religious persons is included.

CHRIST. Sonne, thou must not go back, nor straitwaies be dejected, when thou heares of the way of the perfect; but rather be stirred up to higher things, or at least in desire high after them. I would it were so well with thee, and thou wert come up to this pitch, that thou wert no longer a lover of thy self, but didst stand merely at my beck, & at his whom I have appointed a Father over thee: then thou shouldst exceedingly please me, and all thy life would passe away in joy and peace. Thou hast yet many things to forsake, which unlesse thou wholly resigne up unto me, thou shalt not attain ro that which thou desires. *I counsell thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest become rich*, that is, heavenly wisdome, which treadeth

treadeth under foot all baſe and earthly things. Set little by earthly wiſdome, and care not fondly to pleaſe others or thy ſelf.

3. I ſaid, that the mean things muſt be bought with precious things and ſuch as were with men of great eſteem. For the true heavenly wiſdome ſeemeth mean and of ſmall account, and is ſcarce thought of by men: for that eſteemeth not highly of it ſelf, nor ſeeketh to be magnified upon earth; many praiſe it from the teeth outward, but in their life they are farre from it; yet is it the precious Pearl which is hidden from many.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of inconſtancy of heart, and of directing our finall intentions unto God.

CHRIST. Sonne, truſt not to thy preſent affection; for it will quickly be changed into another thing. As long as thou liveſt, thou art ſubject to mutability, even a-

gainſt thy will: ſo that now thou art merry, now ſad; now quiet, now troubled; now devout, now undevout; now diligent, now ſlow; now grave, now light. But he that is wiſe and well inſtructed in the ſpirit, ſtandeth faſt upon theſe mutable things; not heeding what he feeleth in himſelf, or which way the wind of inſtability bloweth; but that the whole intention of his mind may tend to the right and beſt end. For thus he may continue one, and the ſelf ſame, and unſhaken in the midſt of ſo many various events, directing continually the ſingle eye of his intention unto me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, with ſo much the more conſtancy doth he paſſe through the ſeverall kinds of ſtorms. But in many things the eye of a pure intention waxeth dimſighted, for it quickly looketh upon ſome delightſome object that it meeteth withall: And it is rare to find

find one that is wholly free from all blemish of self-seeking. So the Iews in times past came into Bethany to Martha and Mary, not for Iesus alone, but to see Lazarus also. The eye of our intention therefore is to be purged, that it may be single and right, and to be directed unto me, beyond the manifold diversity of all mediums, and whatsoever earthly objects come between.

CHAP. XXXIV.

That God is sweet, above all things, & in all things, to him that loveth.

CHRISTIAN. *Behold, My God, and all things.* What would I have more, and what more happy thing can I desire? O sweet and savoury word! but to him that loveth the Word, not the world nor those things that are in the world. *My God, and all things.* Enough is said to him, that understandeth; and to him that loveth it is pleasant to repeat it often. For when Thou art present, all things

do yield delight; but when thou art absent, every thing becomes irksome. Thou giveſt quiet of heart, and much peace, and pleaſant joy. Thou makeſt us think well of all things, & praiſe thee in all things: neither can any thing pleaſe long without thee: but if it be pleaſant and gratefull, thy grace muſt be preſent, and it muſt be ſeaſoned with the ſweetneſs of thy wiſdome.

2. What is not ſavoury unto him to whom thou art pleaſing? And whom thou delighteſt not, what can be pleaſant to him? But the wiſe of this world, and they that reliſh the things of the fleſh, come ſhort of thy wiſdome: for in the world is much vanity, and in the fleſh is death. But they that follow thee by the contempt of wordly things, and mortification of the fleſh, are proved to be truly wiſe: For they are changed from vanity to truth, from the fleſh to the ſpirit. Theſe reliſh God; and what good ſoever is found in creatures,

tures, they wholly referre unto the praise of their Maker. Notwithstanding great, yea very great is the difference between the sweetnesse of the creatour and of the creature, of eternity and of time, of light uncreated and of light enlightned.

3. O thou everlasting light, surpassing all created lights, dart the beams of thy brightnesse from above, which may pierce all the most inward parts of my heart: purifie, rejoyce, enlighten and enliven my spirit, with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto thee with abundance of joy and triumph. O when will that blessed and desired hour come, that I may be filled with thy presence, & thou maiest be unto me all in all! As long as this is not granted me, I shall not have full joy. Alas! the old man yet liveth in me, he is not wholly crucified, he is not perfectly dead. He doth as yet lust strongly against the spirit, and stirreth up

inward warres, and suffereth not the Kingdome of my soul to be in peace.

4. But thou that rulest the power of the sea, and stillest the rising of the waves thereof, arise and help me: scatter the people that desire war, destroy them in thy might, display thy greatnesse, and let thy right hand be glorified; for there is no hope nor refuge for me, but in thee my Lord God.

CHAP. XXXV.

That there is no security from temptation in this life.

CHRIST. Sonne, there is no security in this life: as long as thou livest, thou shalt alwaies have need of spirituall armour. Thou livest among enemies, and art assaulted on the right hand and on the left. If therefore thou defendest not thy self on every side with the shield of patience, thou canst not be long unwounded. Moreover, if thou fix not thy heart on me with a sincere will to suffer all things for me,

me, thou canſt not beare the heat of this battel, nor obtain the triumphant reward of the Saints in bliſſe. Thou oughteſt therefore manfully to go through all, & to uſe a ſtrong hand againſt whatſoever withſtandeth thee. For to him that overcometh is manna given; but for the negligent there remaines much miſery.

2. If thou ſeekeſt reſt in this world, how wilt thou then attain to everlaſting reſt? Diſpoſe not thy ſelf to much eaſe, but to much patience. Seek true peace, not in earth, but in heaven; not in men nor in any other creature, but in God alone. Thou oughteſt for the love of God willingly to undergoe all things, even labours, griefs, temptations, vexations, anxieties, neceſſities, infirmities, injuries, detractions, reprehenſions, humblings, ſhame, corrections, and contempts: theſe help to virtue: theſe try a Novice of Chriſt: theſe make the heavenly crown. I will give an everlaſting reward

reward for a short labour, and infinite glory for transitory shame.

3. Thinkest thou that thou shalt alwaies have spirituall consolations at will? My Saints had not so, but they had many afflictions, and sundry temptations, & many discomforts: in all which they did bear up themselves patiently, & trusted rather in God then in themselves, knowing that the sufferings of this time are not condigne to the deserving of future glory. Wilt thou have that straight wayes, which many after many tears and great labours have hardly obteined? Wait upon the Lord, do manfully, be of good courage: do not despair, do not fly, but with constancy expose both body and soul for the glory of God. I will reward thee in most plentifull manner, and I will be with thee in all thy tribulations.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Against the vain judgements of men.

CHRIST. Sonne, cast thy heart constantly upon God, & fear not the

the judgements of men, when thy conscience giveth testimony of thy piety and innocency. It is a good and happy thing to suffer in such a way: neither will it be burdensome to an humble heart, nor to him that trusteth rather in God then in himself. The most part of men are given to talk much, and therefore little heed is to be given them: neither is it possible to satisfie all. Although *Paul* endeavoured to please all in the Lord, and made himself all things unto all, yet with him it was a very small thing that he should be judged of mans judgement.

2. He did for the edification and salvation of others as much as he could, and lay in him; yet could he not hinder but that he was sometimes judged and despised by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all; and he defended himself with patience and humility against evil tongues, and such as thought vanities and lies, and spake what they listed: Yet

Yet sometimes nothwithstanding he answered, lest the weak should be offended by his silence.

3. Who art thou that feareſt a mortall man? To day he is, and to morrow he is not seen. Fear God, and thou shalt not need to fear the terrours of men. What harm can the words or injuries of any do thee? He rather hurteth himself then thee; neither can he avoid the judgement of God, whosoever he be. Have thou God before thine eyes, and contend not with complaining words. And if for the present thou seemeſt to be worsted, and to suffer shame without desert; do not therefore repine, neither do thou lessen thy crown by thy impatience; but rather lift up thy eyes to me in heaven who am able to deliver thee from all shame and wrong, and to render to every one according to their works.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Of a full and pure resignation of our selves, for the obtaining freedome of heart.

CHRIST. Sonne, forsake thy self, and thou shalt find me. Make no self-respecting choice of any thing, appropriate nothing to thy self, and thou shalt ever be a gainer. For greater grace shall be given thee, when thou dost perfectly resigne thy self, and not turn back to take thy self again.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, how often shall I resigne my self? and wherein shall I forsake my self?

CHRIST. Alwaies, and every hour, as well in little things as in great. I do except nothing, but do require that thou be naked *and void* of all things. Otherwise how canst thou be mine, and I thine, unlesse both within and without thou be free from all self-will? And how much the sooner thou dost this, so much the better it will be with

with thee; and how much the more fully and sincerely thou doest it, so much the more shalt thou please me, and so much the more shalt thou gain.

2. Some there are that resigne themselves, but with some exception; for they put not their whole trust in God, and therefore they study how to provide for themselves. Some also at the first do offer all, but afterwards being assailed with temptations, do return again to that which they had left, and therefore they go not forward in the way of virtue. These shall not attain to the true liberty of the pure heart, nor to the savour of my sweetest familiarity; unless they first make an entire resignation and a daily oblation of themselves unto me. For without this there neither is nor can be the fruitive union with me.

3. I have often said unto thee, and now again I say the same. Forsake thy self, resign thy self, and thou

thou ſhalt enjoy much inward peace. Give all for all; ſeek nothing, require back nothing, abide purely and with a firm confidence in me, and thou ſhalt enjoy me; thou ſhalt be free in heart, and darkneſſe ſhall not have power over thee. Let this be thy whole endeavour, let this be thy prayer, let this be thy deſire; that being ſtript of all ſelfneſſe, thou mayeſt even nakedly follow naked Ieſus, and dying to thy ſelf, may ſt live eternally to me. Then ſhall all vain imaginations, evil perturbations, and ſuperfluous cares fly away: then ſhall immoderate fear leave thee, and inordinate love ſhall die.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Of good government in outward things, and of recourſe to God in dangers.

CHRIST. Son, thou oughtteſt with all diligence to procure, that in every place and action or

or externall businesse, thou be inwardly free and master of thy self, and that all things be under thee, and thou not under them; that thou mayst be lord and master of thy actions, not a servant or a hireling, but rather a freeman and a true Hebrew, passing into the lot and freedome of the sons of God, who standing upon the things that are present, view the things which are eternall; who look on transitory things with the left eye, and with the right do behold the things of heaven; whom temporall things cannot draw to cleave unto them, but they rather draw temporall things to serve them, and to be disposed by them in such a way as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creatour of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remain stedfast in all events, and dost not weigh by the outward appearance, nor with a carnall eye, the things which thou seest

eeit and heareſt; but preſently in very affair doſt enter with Moſes nto the Tabernacle to ask counſell f the Lord; thou ſhalt ſometimes ear the divine Oracle, and ſhalt eturn inſtructed concerning many hings both preſent and to come. or Moſes had alwaies recourſe to he Tabernacle for the deciding f doubts and controverſies, and led to the help of prayer, for a de-ence againſt the iniquity and dan-ers of men. So oughteſt thou in ke manner to fly to the cloſet of hy heart, earneſtly craving the Di-ine favour. For the Scripture teſti-yeth, that therefore was Ioſhuah nd the children of Iſrael deceived y the Gibeonites, becauſe they sked not counſell at the mouth of he Lord, but giving too lightly redit to their fair words, were de-uded with their counterfeit piety.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

That a man be not over earneſt in his affairs.

CHRIST. Son, alwaies commit thy cauſe to me, I will diſpoſe well of it in due time: wait for my ordering of it, and thou ſhalt find it will be for thy good.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, I am moſt willingly commit all unto thee, for my care can avail little. O that I cleaved not too much to future events, but offered my ſelf with all readineſſe of mind to thy good pleaſure!

2. CHRIST. Son, oftentimes a man doth earneſtly labour for that which he deſireth, and when he hath gotten it, he beginneth to be of another mind; for mans affections do not long continue fixed on one thing, but do paſſe from one to another. It is therefore no ſmall thing for a man to forſake himſelf even in the ſmalleſt things.

3. The true ſpirituall profiting

if a man consisteth in the denying of himself: and he that is thus resigned, liveth in great freedome and security. But the old enemy, who alwayes sets himself against all that are good, ceaseth at no time from tempting, but day and night lieth grievously in wait, to cast the unwary, if he can, into the snare of deceit. Therefore *Watch and pray, saith our Lord, that ye enter not into temptation.*

CHAP. XL.

That man hath no good of himself, nor any thing whereof he can glory.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, what is man that thou art mindfull of him, or the son of man, that thou visitest him? What hath man deserved, that thou shouldest favour him? Lord, what cause have I to complain, if thou forsake me? Or if thou doest not that which I desire, what can I justly say against it? Surely, this I may truly think and

and say, Lord, I am nothing, can do nothing, I have nothing that is good of my self; but in all things I am defective, and do ever tend to nothing: and unless thou help me, and dost inwardly instruct me, I become altogether cold, and am dissolved.

2. But thou, O Lord, art always the same, and endurest forever; always good, just, and holy, doing all things well, justly, and holily, and disposing all things with wisdome. But I that am more ready to go backward then forward, do not ever continue in one estate, for seven times are passed over me; yet doth it soon turn to the better, when it so pleaseth thee, and when thou vouchsafest to stretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canst help me without the aide of man, and so strengthen me, that my countenance shall be no more changed, but my heart shall be turned to thee alone, and there shall rest.

3. Where-

3. Wherefore if I could once perfectly forsake all humane comfort, either for the attaining of devotion, or for mine own necessitie, which inforceth me to seek after thee, (for none else can comfort me) then might I well hope in thy grace, and rejoyce for the gift of new consolation.

4. Thanks be unto thee, from from whence all proceedeth, as often as it goeth well with me: but I am mere vanity and nothing in thy sight, an unconstant and weak man. Whereof then can I glory? Or for what do I desire to be esteemed of? is it not even for nothing? But this is most vain. Truly vain glory is an evil plague and a very great vanity; because it draweth man from true glory, and robbeth him of heavenly grace. For whilst a man pleaseth himself, he displeaseth thee; whilst he gapeth after the praise of men, he is deprived of true virtues.

5. But the true glory and holy re-

rejoycing is for a man to glory in thee, and not in himself; to rejoyce in thy name, and not in his own virtue *or strength*, nor to delight in any creature, but for thee. Praised be thy name, not mine; magnified be thy work, not mine. Let thy holy name be blessed, but to me let no part of mens praise be given. Thou art my glory, thou art the joy of my heart. In thee will I glory and rejoyce all the day; but as for my self I will not glory, but in my infirmities.

6. Let the Iews seek honour one of another; I will desire this which is from God alone. For all humane glory, all temporall honour, all worldly highnesse, compared to thy eternall glory, is vanity and folly. O my truth, my mercy, my God, most Blessed Trinity, to thee alone be praise, honour, power and glory for evermore.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLI.

Of the contempt of all temporall honours.

CHRIST. Sonne, trouble not thy self, if thou seest others honoured and advanced, and thy self contemned and debased. Lift up thy heart unto me in heaven, and the contempt of men on earth will not grieve thee.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, we are blind, and quickly seduced with vanitie. If I look well into my self, I cannot say that any creature hath done me wrong; and therefore I cannot justly complain of thee.

2. But because I have often and grievously sinned against thee, all creatures do justly take arms against me: for shame and contempt is due unto me, but unto thee praise, honour, and glory. And unlesse I frame my self with a very good will to be despised and forsaken of all creatures, and to be esteemed nothing at all; I cannot obtain inward peace and strength,

nor be spiritually enlightned, nor fully united unto thee.

CHAP. XLII.

That our peace is not to be placed in men.

CHRIST. Son, if the peace thou hast with any be grounded upon the opinion which thou hast of him, or upon the account of thine acquaintance with him, thou shalt ever be in an unconstant and enthralled condition: but if thou have recourse unto the ever-living and eternall Truth, a friend going from thee or dying shall not grieve thee. The love of thy friend ought to be grounded in me; and for me is he to be beloved, whosoever he be whom thou thinkest well of, and is very dear unto thee in this life. No friendship can avail, or continue without me; neither is that love true and pure, which is not knit by me. Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved friends, that (forasmuch as appertaineth unto thee)

thee) thou ſhouldeſt wiſh to be without all company of men. Man approcheth ſo much the nearer unto God, by how much the further off he departeth from all earthly comfort: ſo much the higher alſo he aſcendeth unto God, by how much lower he deſcendeth into himſelf, and how much the meaner he is in his own ſight.

2. But he that attributeth any good unto himſelf, hindreth the coming of Gods grace into him; for the grace of the holy Ghoſt ever ſeeketh an humble heart. If thou couldſt perfectly annihilate thy ſelf, and empty thy ſelf of all created love; then ſhould I flow into thee with great abundance of grace. When thou caſteſt thy eyes on creatures, the ſight of thy Creatour is taken from thee. Learn to overcome thy ſelf in all things, for the love of thy Creatour; and then ſhalt thou be able to attain to divine knowledge. How little ſoever the thing be, if it be inordinately

loved and regarded; it defileth the soul, and hindreth the enjoying of the chiefest good.

CHAP. XLIII.

Against vain and secular knowledge.

CHRIST. Son, let not the fair speeches and subtile sayings of men move thee. For *the Kingdom of God consisteth not in word, but in power*. Observe well my words; for they enflame hearts, and enlighten minds, they cause compunction, and bring sundry comforts. Do thou never read to shew thy self learned or wise; but labour to mortify thy sins; for that will profit thee more then the knowledge of many difficult questions.

2. When thou shalt have read and known many things; thou oughtest ever to return ro one beginning and Principle. I am he, that teacheth man knowledge, and give unto babes a more clear understanding, then can be taught by man.

man. He therefore, to whom I ſpeak, ſhall quickly be wiſe, and ſhall profit much in the ſpirit. Wo be to them that enquire many curious things of men, and do little mind the way how to ſerve me. The time will come, when the Maſter of maſters ſhall appear, Chriſt the Lord of Angels, to hear the leſſons of all, that is, to examine the conſciences of every one: and then he will ſearch Ieruſalem with a candle, and the hidden things of darkneſſe ſhall be laid open, and the arguings of mens tongues ſhall be ſilent.

3. I am he that in an inſtant do raiſe up the humble mind to underſtand more of the eternall truth, then can be gotten by ten years ſtudy in the ſchools: I teach without the noiſe of words, without the confounding of opinions, without ambition of honour, without the ſcuffling of arguments. I am he that teacheth to deſpiſe earthly things, to lothe things preſent, to

ſeek the everlaſting, to reliſh the things that are eternall, to fly honours, to ſuffer injuries, to place all hope in me, to deſire nothing out of me, and above all things ardently to love me.

4. For a certain perſon by loving me entirely, learned divine things, and ſpake that which was admirable: he profited more by forſaking all things, then in ſtudying ſubtilties. To ſome I ſpeak common things, to others more ſpeciall things; to ſome I appear ſweetly by ſigns and figures, but to ſome I reveal myſteries with much light. The voice of books is indeed one, but it teacheth not all men alike. For I am the inward Teacher, I am the Truth, I am the ſearcher of the heart, the diſcerner of the thoughts, the ſetter forwards of what is good, diſtributing to every one as I judge meet.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIV.

Of not drawing outward things to our ſelves.

CHRIST. Son, in many things thou oughteſt to be ignorant, and eſteem thy ſelf as dead upon earth, and as one to whom the whole world is crucified. Thou muſt alſo paſſe by many things with a deaf ear, and rather think of that which appertaineth to thy peace. It is better for thee to turn thine eyes from what doth miſlike thee, and to leave unto every one his own opinion, then to ſtrive with contentious words. If all ſtand well betwixt thee and God, and if thou haſt his judgement in thy mind, thou ſhalt the more eaſily bear if thou be overcome.

2. CHRISTIAN. O Lord, to what a paſſe are we come! Behold, we bewail a temporall loſſe, for a little gain we toil and runne; and the ſpirituall damage of our ſoul is forgotten, and hardly at length called to mind. That which

little or nothing profiteth, is minded; and that which is chiefly necessary, is slightly passed over, because the whole man doth slide down into externall things; and unlesse he speedily repent, he lieth immerst in them, and that willingly.

Chap. XLV.

That credit is not to be given to all men: and how prone man is to offend in words.

Christian. Help me, O Lord, in my tribulation, for vain is the help of man. How often have I been deceived, finding want of faith, where I thought it sure? And how often have I found faith where I least expected it? It is vain therefore to trust in men; but the salvation of the just, O Lord, is in thee. Blessed be thou my Lord God, in all things that befall us. We are weak and inconstant, quickly deceived, and soon changed.

2. Who is he, that in all things so

so warily and circumspectly keeps himself, that he never falls into any deceit or perplexity? But he that trusteth in thee, O Lord, and seeketh thee with a single heart, doth not so easily fall; and if he fall into any tribulation, be he never so much enthralled, yet he shall quickly be either delivered or comforted by thee. For thou wilt not forsake him for ever that trusteth in thee. A friend is rare to be found, that continueth faithfull in all his friends distresse; but thou, O Lord, thou alone art most faithfull at all times, and there is none like unto thee.

3. O how wise was that holy soul that said, My mind is firmly settled and grounded in Christ! If it were so with me, then would not humane fear so easily trouble me, nor the darts of words move me. Who can foresee all things? Who is able to beware beforehand of future evils? If things even foreseen do oftentimes hurt us, how can

things unlooked for chooſe but wound us grievouſly? But why did I not provide better for my ſelf, miſerable wretch? Why alſo have I ſo eaſily given credit to others? But we are men, nothing but frail men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom ſhall I give credit, Lord? to whom but to thee? Thou art the Truth that neither doſt deceive, nor can be deceived. And on the other ſide, Every man is a liar, weak, unconſtant, and ſubject to fall, eſpecially in words: and therefore we muſt not eaſily give credit even to that, which in outward ſhew ſeemeth at the firſt to be right.

4. O with what wiſdome haſt thou warned us to beware of men! And becauſe a mans foes are they of his own houſhold, not to give credit, if one ſhould ſay, *Lo here*, or *Lo there*. I am taught to my coſt, and O that I might thereby encreaſe my care, and not my folly. Be wary ſaith one, be wary, keep to

to thy self what I tell thee: and whilst I hold my peace, and think it is secret, he cannot keep that secret which he desired should be secret, but presently discloseth me and himself, and goeth his way. From such tales and such indiscreet persons protect me, O Lord, that I fall not into their hands, nor ever commit such things. Give me to observe truth and constancy in my words, and remove farre from me a deceitfull tongue. What I am not willing to suffer, I ought by all means to avoid.

5. O how good is it and tending to peace, to be silent of others, nor to believe promiscuously all that is said, nor easily to report what we have heard; to lay ones self open to few; always to seek after thee who art the beholder of the heart; not to be carried about with every wind of words, but to desire that all things both within and without, be accomplished according to the pleasure of thy will.

How

How safe is it for the keeping of heavenly grace, to fly the sight of men, and not to seek those things that seem to cause admiration abroad, but to follow that with all diligence, which bringeth amendment of life and zeal of godlinesse.

6. To how many hath virtue known and over-hastily commended, been hurtfull? How profitable hath grace been kept with silence in this mortall life, which is nothing but a temptation and a warfare?

CHAP. XLVI.

Of putting our trust in God when evil words arise.

CHRIST. Son, be constant, and put thy trust in me. For what are words but words? They fly through the air, but hurt not so much as a stone. If thou be guilty, see that thou be not unwilling to amend thy self: if thou be innocent, resolve to suffer this willingly for the sake of God. It is but a small

small matter to suffer sometimes a few words, if thou hast not yet the courage to endure hard stripes. And why do small matters go to thy heart, but for that thou art yet carnall, and regardest men more then thou oughtest? Because thou art afraid to be despised, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, but seekest the shades of excuses.

2. But look better into thy self, and thou shalt see that the world is yet alive in thee, and a vain affection to please men. For when thou shunnest to be humbled and reproved for thy faults, it is evident that thou art neither truly humble, nor truly dead to the world, nor the world crucified to thee. But give diligent ear to my words, and thou shalt little regard ten thousand words spoken by men. Behold, if all should be spoken against thee that could be most maliciously invented, what would it hurt thee, if thou sufferedst it to passe, and madest

deſt no more reckoning of it then of a mote? could all thoſe words pluck as much as one hair from thy head?

3. But he that hath no heart in him, nor hath God before his eyes, is eaſily moved with a word of diſpraiſe; when as he that truſteth in me, and affects not to confide in his own judgement, ſhall be free from humane fears. For I am the Iudge and the diſcerner of all ſecrets: I know how the matter paſſed, I know him that offereth the injury, and him that ſuffereth it. From me hath this proceeded: this hath happened by my permiſſion. that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. I ſhall judge the guilty, and the innocent; but by a ſecret judgement I would before hand try them both.

4. The teſtimony of men oftentimes deceiveth: but my judgement is true; it ſhall ſtand, and not be overthrown. It is commonly hidden, and not known in every thing.

thing, but to few: notwithſtanding it never erreth, neither can it erre, although to the eyes of the fooliſh it ſeems not right. Men ought therefore to have recourſe to me in every judgement, and not to leane to their own opinions. For the juſt man will not be troubled, whatſoever befalleth him from God: and if any thing be wrongfully brought forth againſt him, he will not much care; neither will he vainly be glad, if by others he be with reaſon excuſed. For he conſidereth that I am he that ſearcheth the heart and reins, and do judge not according to the outward face; nor humane apparence. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my ſight, that in the judgement of men is thought to be commendable.

5. CHRISTIAN. O Lord God, the juſt Iudge, ſtrong and patient, thou who knoweſt the frailty and pravity of man; be thou my ſtrength, and all my truſt, for mine own conſcience ſufficeth me not

not. Thou knoweſt that which I know not, and therefore in every reproofe I ought to have humbled my ſelf, and to have born meekly: vouchſafe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I have failed herein, and give me again grace of greater ſufferance. For thy abundant mercy is more available to me for the obtaining of pardon, then my conceived juſtice for the defence of my hidden conſcience. Although I know nothing by my ſelf, yet I cannot hereby juſtifie my ſelf; for without thy mercy no man living ſhall be juſtified in thy ſight.

CHAP. XLVII.

That all grievous things are to be endured for life everlaſting.

CHRIST. Son, be not diſmaied with the painfull labours which thou haſt undertaken for me, neither be thou wholly diſcomforted for the tribulations which do befall thee; but let my promiſe ſtrengthen and comfort thee in all events. I am able to reward

ward thee infinitely and above all measure. Thou shalt not long toil here, nor alwaies be pressed with griefs, Wait a while, and thou shalt see a speedy end of thy evils. There will come an hour when all labour and trouble shall cease. Little and short is all that which passeth away with time.

2. Do what thou dost; labour faithfully in my vineyard; I will be thy reward. Write, read, sing, mourn, keep silence, pray, suffer crosses manfully: life everlasting is worthy of all these yea and greater combats. Peace shall come in the day which is known unto the Lord, and there shall be neither day nor night, to wit, of this time, but everlasting light, infinite brightness, stedfast peace, and secure rest. Then thou shalt not say, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* nor crie, *Wo is me, that my sojourning is prolonged!* For death shall be thrown down, and salvation shall appear which never shall have end; there

shall

shall be no anxiety: but blessed joy, sweet and lovely company.

3. O, if thou hadst seen the everlasting crowns of the Saints in heaven, and with how great glory they now rejoyce who in times past were contemptible to this world, and esteemed unworthy of life it self truly thou wouldest presently humble thy self even unto the earth and wouldest rather seek to be under the feet of all, then to have command so much as over one: neither wouldst thou desire the pleasant dayes of this life, but rather rejoyce to suffer affliction for God, and esteem it thy greatest gain to be reputed as nothing amongst men.

4. O if thou hadst a relishing of these things, and didst suffer them to sink into the bottome of thy heart, how durst thou so much as once to complain? Are not all painfull labours to be endured for everlasting life? It is no small matter, to lose or to gain the Kingdome

dome of heaven. Lift up thy face therefore unto heaven: behold I, and all my Saints with me, who in this world had great conflicts, do now rejoyce, now are comforted, now are secure, now are at rest, and shall remain with me everlastingly in the Kingdome of my Father.

CHAP. XLVIII.

Of the everlasting day, and shortnesse of this life.

CHRISTIAN. O most blessed mansion of the heavenly City! O most clear day of Eternity, which night obscureth not, but the highest Truth ever enlightneth; A day of continuall joy, of perpetuall quietnesse, and never changing into a contrary state! O that that day would once appear, and all these temporall things were at an end! To the Saints it shineth glistering with everlasting brightnesse, but to those that are Pilgrimes upon earth, it appeareth only afarre of, and as it were through a glasse.

2. The Citizens of heaven do know

know how joyfull that day is: but the banished children of Eve bewail the bitternesse and tediousnesse of this. The dayes of this life are short and evil, full of sorrow & anguish; where man is defiled with many sinnes, incumbred with many passions, disquieted with many fears, filled with many cares, distracted with many curiosities, intangled with many vanities, compassed about with many errours, worn away with many labours, vexed with temptations, weakned with pleasures, tormented with want.

3. O, when shall these evils be at an end! When shall I be delivered from the miserable bondage of sin! When shall I think, O Lord, of thee alone! When shall I fully rejoyce in thee! When shall I enjoy true liberty without all impediments whatsoever, without all trouble of mind and body! When shall I have solid peace, secure and undisturbed peace, peace within and

and without, peace every way assured! O good Iesus, when shall I stand to behold thee! When shall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdome! When wilt thou be unto me All in all! O when shall I be with thee in thy Kingdome, which thou hast prepared for thy beloved, from all eternity! I am left a poor and banished man in the land of mine enemies, where there are daily warres and great calamities.

4. Comfort my banishment, asswage my sorrow; for my whole desire sigheth after thee. For all is burdensome to me, whatsoever this world offereth for my comfort. I long to enjoy thee most inwardly, but I cannot attain unto it. My desire is, that I may be wholly given up to heavenly things, but temporall things & unmortified passions weigh me down. With the mind I would be above all things, but with the flesh I am inforced to be subject against my will. Thus unhappy man that I am, I fight against my

self, and am become grievous to my self, whilst my spirit seeketh to be above, and my flesh to be below.

5. O what do I inwardly suffer, when in my mind I consider heavenly things, and presently in my prayers a multitude of carnall imaginations present themselves before me! My God, be not farre from me, depart not in thy wrath from thy servant. Cast forth thy lightning, and disperse them: send out thy darts, and break all the imaginations which my enemy casts in. Gather in, call home my senses unto thee, make me forget all the things of this world: grant me to cast away speedily the imaginations of wickednesse. Succour me, O thou the everlasting Truth, that no vanity may move me. Come heavenly sweetnesse and let all impuritie flie from before thee. Pardon me also, and mercifully forgive me as often as I think upon any thing else besides thee in prayer. I do truly confesse, that I

am

n wont to be ſubject to many di-
ractions: for oftentimes I am not
here, where I do corporally ſtand,
ſit; but I am rather there, whi-
er my thoughts do carry me.
here my thought is there am I:
ere is oftentimes my thought,
here my affection is. That quick-
offereth it ſelf unto me, which
naturally delightſome, or by cu-
ome is pleaſing.

6. And for this cauſe, thou that
t Truth it ſelf haſt plainly ſaid,
here thy treaſure is, there is alſo
y heart. If I love heaven, I will-
gly think of heavenly things. If
love the world, I rejoyce at the
licity of the world, and grieve for
e adverſity thereof. If I love the
eſh, I ſhall fancy oftentimes thoſe
ings that are pleaſing to the fleſh:
I love the ſpirit, I delight to
ink of ſpirituall things. For
hatſoever I love, thereof do I
illingly ſpeak, and hear, and car-
y home with me the forms *the I-*
as and repreſentations thereof. But

bleſſed

blessed is that man, that for thee O Lord, dismisseth all creatures that violently resisteth nature, and through fervour of spirit crucifieth the lusts of the flesh; that so with a serene conscience he may offer pure prayer unto thee, and be meet to be admitted into the Angelical quire, all earthly things both outwardly and inwardly being excluded.

CHAP. XLIX.

Of the desire of everlasting life, and how great rewards are promised to those that fight valiantly.

CHRIST. Sonne, when thou perceivest the desire of everlasting blisse to be given thee from above, and desirest to depart out of the Tabernacle of this body, that thou maiest behold my brightnesse without shadow of turning; open thy heart wide, and receive this holy inspiration with thy whole desire. Give greatest thanks to the heavenly goodnesse, that dealeth

dealeth with thee ſo favourably, viſiteth thee mercifully, ſtirreth thee up fervently, holdeth thee up powerfully, leſt through thine own weight thou fall down to the things of earth. Neither doſt thou obtain this by thine own thought or endeavour, but by the mere dignation of heavenly grace and divine favour; to the end that thou maiſt make a further progreſſe in holineſſe, and obtain greater humility, and prepare thy ſelf for future battels, and endeavour to cleave unto me with the whole affection of thy heart, and ſerve me with a fervent deſire.

2. Sonne, the fire burneth many times, but the flame aſcendeth not up without ſmoke: ſo likewiſe the deſires of ſome men burn towards heavenly things, and yet they are not free from temptation of carnall affection: and therefore it is not altogether purely for the honour of God that which they ſo earneſtly requeſt of him. Such is

also oftentimes thy desire, which thou hast pretended to be so serious. For that is not pure and perfect, which is tinctured with the love of thine own proper commodity and interest.

3. Ask not that which is delightfull & profitable to thee, but that which is acceptable to me, and appertaineth to my honour: for if thou judgest aright, thou oughtest to preferre & follow my appointment, rather then thine own desire, or any desired thing. I know thy desire, and have heard thy frequent grones. Now thou wouldest enjoy the glorious liberty of the Sons of God: now doth the everlasting habitation, and the heavenly Country repleniſhed with all joy, delight thee; but that hour is not yet come: as yet there is another time, to wit, a time of war, a time of labour and triall. Thou desirest to be filled with the chiefest good, but thou canst not attain it for the present. I am he, saith the

the Lord, whom thou muſt patiently wait for, untill the Kingdome of God doth come.

4. Thou art yet to be tryed upon earth, and to be exerciſed in many things. Comfort ſhall be ſometimes given thee, but the abundant fulneſſe thereof ſhall not be granted. Take courage therefore, and be valiant as well in doing as in ſuffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughteſt to put on the new man, and to be changed into another man. Thou muſt oftentimes do that which thou wouldeſt not, and leave undone that thou wouldeſt do. That which is pleaſing to others, ſhall go well forward: that which thou wiſheſt, ſhall not ſpeed. That which others ſay, ſhall be heard: what thou ſaiſt, ſhall be nothing regarded. Others ſhall ask and ſhall receive; Thou ſhalt ask and not obtain.

5. Others ſhall be great in the praiſe of men, but of thee there ſhall be no ſpeech. To others this

or that shall be committed, but thou shalt be accounted fit for nothing. At this nature will sometimes be troubled, and it is much if thou beareſt it with silence. In theſe and many such like, a faithfull servant of the Lord is wont to be tried, how he can deny & break himself in all things. There is scarce any thing, wherein thou haſt had such need to dye to thy self, as in seeing & suffering those things that are contrary to thy will; especially when that is commanded, which seemeth unto thee inconvenient, or leſſe profitable. And for that thou being placed under authoritie, dareſt not reſiſt higher power, therefore it seemeth hard unto thee to walk at the beck of another, and to leave all thine own opinion.

6. But consider, Son, the fruit of theſe labours, the end near at hand, and the reward exceeding great; and thou shalt be so far from suſtaining them grievouſly, that thou

thou wilt take great comfort of thy patience. For in regard of that little of thy will, which now thou willingly forſakeſt, thou ſhalt alwaies have thy will in heaven. There thou ſhalt finde all that thou wilt or canſt deſire; there thou ſhalt enjoy all good without fear of loſing it; there ſhall thy will be ever one with me; it ſhall not covet any outward or private thing. There no man ſhall withſtand thee, no man complain of thee, no man hinder thee, nothing come againſt thee: but all things deſired ſhall be there together preſent, & refreſh thy whole affection, and fill it up to the brim. There I will give thee glory for the reproch which here thou ſufferedſt; the garment of praiſe for heavineſſe: for the loweſt place a kingly Throne for ever; there ſhall the fruit of obedience appear, the labour of repentance rejoyce, and humble ſubjection ſhall be glorioufly crowned.

7. Now therefore be humbly obedient unto all, and regard not who said or commanded this; but take great heed, that whether thy Superiour, or thy inferiour, or thine equall, require any thing of thee, or do insinuate their desire; thou take it all in good part, and endeavour to fulfill it with a sincere will. Let one seek this, another that; let him glory in this, the other in that, & be praised a thousand thousand times; but do thou neither rejoyce in this, nor in that, but in the contempt of thy self, and onely in my good pleasure and honour. This art thou to wish, that whether it be by life or death, God may be alwaies glorified in thee.

CHAP. L.

How a disconsolate person ought to offer himself into the hands of God.

CHRISTIAN. Lord God, Holy Father, be thou blessed both now and for evermore; because as thou wilt, so is it done, & what thou doest, is good. Let thy servant

servant rejoyce in thee, not in himself, nor in any thing else; for thou alone art the true gladnesse, thou art my hope and my crown, thou art my joy and my honour, O Lord. What hath thy servant, but what he hath received from thee, even without any merit of his? Thine is all that thou hast given, and whatsoever thou hast made. I am poor, and in labours from my youth: and sometimes my soul is sorrowfull even unto teares; sometimes also it is troubled in it self by reason of the evils which hang over mine head.

2. I long after the joy of peace, I earnestly crave the peace of thy children that are fed by thee in the light of thy comfort. If thou give peace, if thou pour into my heart holy joy; the soul of thy servant shall be full of gladnesse, and shall become devout in thy praise: but if thou withdraw thy self, (as many times thou doest) he will not be able to runne the wayes of thy

commandmens; but rather he will bow his knees, & knock his breast, for it is not now with him as it was heretofore, when thy candle shined upon his head, and he was protected under the shadow of thy wings, from the temptations which violently assaulted him.

3. O righteous Father, and ever to be praised, the hour is come, that thy servant is to be tryed! Behold dear Father, meet it is that in this hour thy servant suffer something for thy sake. O Father evermore to be honoured, the hour is come, which from all eternity thou didst foreknow should come; that for a short time thy servant should outwardly be oppressed, but inwardly live for ever with thee: that he should be a little despised, humbled, & made as an abject in the sight of men, and much afflicted with passions & infirmities; that he may rise again with thee in the morning of the new light, and be glorified in heaven.

ven. Holy Father, thou haſt ſo appointed it, and wilt have it ſo: and this is fulfilled which thy ſelf haſt commanded.

4. It is a favour to thy friend that he may ſuffer, and be afflicted in the world for love of thee; how often ſoever, and by whomſoever, thou permitteſt it to fall upon him. For in the world nothing cometh to paſſe, without thy counſell, without thy providence, or without a cauſe why. It is good for me, Lord, that thou haſt afflicted me, that I may learn thy righteous judgements, and caſt away all haughtineſſe of heart, and preſumption. It is profitable to me, that ſhame hath covered my face, that I may rather ſeek to thee for comfort then to men. I have learned alſo hereby to dread thy unſearchable judgements, who afflicteſt the juſt with the wicked, but not without equitie and juſtice.

5. I give thee thanks, for that thou haſt not ſpared my ſins, but

haſt worn me away with bitter ſtripes, inflicting ſorrows, and ſending griefs within and without. There is none under heaven that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the heavenly Phyſician of ſouls, that ſtrikeſt and healeſt, bringeſt down to hell and bringeſt back again: let thy correction be upon me; and let thy rod inſtruct me.

6. Behold, dear Father, I am in thy hands, I bow my ſelf under the rod of thy correction: ſtrike my back and my neck too, that my crookedneſſe may be conformed to thy will. Make me an holy and humble diſciple of thine, (as thou art wont well to do) that I may be ready at every beck of thy divine pleaſure. I commend my ſelf and all mine unto thee to be corrected. It is better to be corrected here, then hereafter. Thou knoweſt all and every thing, and there is nothing in the conſcience of man which can be hidden from thee.

Before

Before things are done, thou knoweſt that they will come to paſſe, and haſt no need that any ſhould teach thee, or admoniſh thee of thoſe things which are done on earth. Thou knoweſt what is expedient for my profiting, and how much tribulation is fit to ſcoure off the ruſt of my ſinnes. Do with me according to thy deſired good pleaſure, and diſdaine me not for my ſinfull life, better and more clearly known to none then to thee alone.

7. Grant me, O Lord, to know that which is to be known, to love that which is to be loved, to praiſe that which pleaſeth thee moſt, to eſteem that which is precious unto thee, to deſpiſe that which is contemptible in thy ſight: ſuffer me not to judge according to the ſight of the outward eyes, nor to give ſentence according to the hearing of the eares of ignorant men; but to diſcern of viſible and ſpirituall things with a true judge-

men

ment, and above all things ever to search after thy good will and pleasure.

8. The minds of men are often deceived in their judging; the lovers of the world are also deceived in loving onely visible things. What is a man the better, for that he is esteemed great by man? The deceitfull in exalting the deceitfull, the vain man in extolling the vain, the blind in comending the blind, the weak in magnifying the weak, deceiveth him and doth verily more shame him, while he doth vainly praise him. For how much every one is in thy sight, so much he is, and no more.

CHAP. LI.

That a man ought to imploy himself in works of Humility, when strength is wanting for higher imployments.

CHRIST. Son, thou art not able alwaies to continue in the more fervent desire of vertue, nor to persist in the higher pitch of contemplation; but thou must sometimes of necessity by reason of originall corruption descend to inferiour things, and bear the burden of this corruptible life though against thy will and with grief. As long as thou carriest a mortall bodie, thou shalt feel trouble and heavinesse of heart. Thou oughtest therefore in the flesh oftentimes to bewail the burden of the flesh: for that thou canst not alwaies continue in spirituall exercises and divine contemplation.

2. It is then expedient for thee to flie to humble and exteriour works, and to refresh thy self with good

good actions; to expect with a firm confidence my coming and heavenly visitation, to bear patiently thy banishment and the dryness of thy mind, till I visit thee again, and deliver thee from all anxieties. For I will make thee forget thy former pains, and enjoy inward quietness. I will lay open before thee the pleasant fields of holy Scripture, that with an enlarged heart thou maiest begin to run the way of my commandments. And thou shalt say, *That the sufferings of this present time are not worthy of the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.*

CHAP. LII.

That a man ought to esteem himself not worthy of comfort, but rather to deserve stripes.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any spirituall visitation; and therefore thou dealest justly with me, when thou leavest me poor and

and desolate. For though I could shed a sea of tears, yet I were not worthy of thy comfort. For (alas) I deserve nothing, but to be scourged and punished, in that I have grievously and often offended thee, and have sinned greatly in many things. All things therefore duly considered, I am not worthy even of the least comfort. But thou O gracious and mercifull God, who wilt not that thy works should perish, to shew the riches of thy goodnesse upon the vessels of mercy, even beyond his desert vouchsafest to comfort thy servant above the manner of men. For thy comforts are not like to the words of men.

2. What have I done, O Lord, that thou shouldest bestow any heavenly comfort upon me? I remember not that I have done any good, but have been alwaies prone to sin, and slow to amendment. This is true, and I cannot deny it. If I should say otherwise, thou wouldest

wouldest stand against me, and there would be none to defend me. What have I deserved for my sins, but hell and everlasting fire? I confesse in very truth that I am worthy of all scorn and contempt, and it is not fit that I should be remembred amongst thy holy ones. And although I be unwilling to hear this, yet notwithstanding for the truths sake I will lay open my sins against my self, that so the sooner I may obtain mercy at thy hand.

3. What shall I say being guiltie and full of all confusion? I have nothing to say but this, I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned; have mercy on me, pardon me; suffer me a little, that I may bewail my grief, before I go unto the land of darknesse, a land covered with the shadow of death. What dost thou so much require of a guilty & miserable sinner, as that he be contrite, and humble himself for his offences? of true contrition

rition and humbling of the heart, riseth hope of forgivenesse; the troubled conscience is reconciled to *God*, the favour of God which was lost, is recovered; man is preserved from the wrath to come, and God and the penitent soul meet together with an holy kisse.

4. Humble contrition for sins is an acceptable sacrifice unto thee, O Lord, savouring much sweeter in thy presence then the perfume of frankincense. This is also the pleasant ointment, which thou wouldst should be poured upon thy sacred feet: for thou never despisest a contrite and humbled heart. There is the place of refuge, from the angry face of the enemy; there is amended and washed away, whatsoever defilement elsewhere was contracted, and whatsoever is polluted.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIII.

That the grace of God doth not joyn it self with those that savour of earthly things.

CHRIST. Sonne, my grace is precious, it suffereth not it self to be mingled with external things, nor earthly comforts. Thou oughtest therefore to cast away all hinderances of grace, if thou desire to receive the infusion thereof. Choose therefore a secret place to thy self, love to live alone with thy self, desire the conversation of none; but rather pour out devout prayers unto God, that thou maist keep thy mind in compunction and thy conscience pure. Esteem the whole world as nothing; preferre attendance upon God before all outward things: for thou canst not attend upon me, and be delighted also in transitorie vanities. Thou oughtest to sequester thy self from thy acquaintance and friends,

friends, and to keep thy mind void of all temporall comfort. So the blessed Apostle Peter requited, that the faithfull of Christ should keep themselves as strangers and pilgrimes in this world.

2. O how great a confidence shall he have at the hour of death, whom no affection to any earthly thing detaineth in the world! But the sickly mind is not yet capable of so retired a heart; neither doth the carnall man understand the liberty of him who is inwardly recollected. Notwithstanding if he will be truly spirituall, he ought to renounce as well those which are strangers, as those which are near unto him; and to beware of no man more then of himself. If thou perfectly overcome thy self, thou shalt with more ease subdue the rest. It is a perfect victory to triumph over our selves. For he that keepeth himself subject in such sort, that his sensuality be subdued to reason, and reason in all

all things be obedient to me; he is truly a conquerour of himself, and Lord of the world.

3. If thou desire to mount unto this height, thou must set out courageously, and lay the axe to the root; that thou maiest pluck up and destroy that hidden inordinate inclination to thy self, and unto all private and earthly good. Of this sin (that man too inordinately loveth himself) almost all dependeth, whatsoever is throughly to be overcome: which evil being once overcome and subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquillitie. But for that few endeavour perfectly to die unto themselves, and altogether to go out of themselves, therefore they remain intangled in themselves, and cannot be lifted up in spirit above themselves. But he that desireth to walk freely with me, it is necessary that he mortifie all evil and inordinate affections, and that he should not earnestly adhere

here unto any creature by private love.

CHAP. LIV.

Of the different motions of Nature and Grace.

CHRIST. Son, mark diligently the motions of *Nature*, and *Grace*; for in a very contrary and subtill manner these are moved, and can hardly be discerned but by him that is spiritually and inwardly enlightned. All men indeed desire that which is good, and pretend some good in their words and deeds; and therefore under the shew of good, many are deceived. *Nature* is craftie, and seduceth, intangleth, and deceiveth many, and alwaies proposeth her self for her end; but *Grace* walketh in simplicitie, and avoideth all shew of evil, pretendeth not deceits, and doth all things purely for Gods sake, in whom also she finally resteth.

2. Nature will not willingly die,

die, nor be kept down, nor be overcome, nor be subject to any, nor be subdued: but *Grace* mindeth self mortification, resisteth sensualitie, seeketh to be subject, is willing to be kept under, and will not use her own libertie: she loveth to be kept under discipline, and desireth not to rule any, but alwaies to live and remain wholly subject unto God, and for God is readie humbly to bow unto all men. *Nature* striveth for her own commoditie; and considereth what profit she may reap by another; but *Grace* considereth not what is profitable and commodious unto her self, but rather what is profitable to many. *Nature* willingly receiveth honour and reverence: but *Grace* faithfully attributeth all honour and glorie unto God.

3. *Nature* feareth shame and contempt; but *Grace* rejoyceth to suffer reproch for the name of Iesus. *Nature* loveth idlenesse and bodily

bodily reſt; but *Grace* cannot be idle, but willingly imbraceth labour. *Nature* ſeeketh to have thoſe things that be curious and glorious, abhorreth that which is mean and courſe; but *Grace* delighteth in plain and humble things, deſpiſeth not rough things, nor refuſeth to wear that which is old and torn. *Nature* reſpecteth temporall things, rejoyceth at earthly gain, ſorroweth for loſſe, is moved with every little injurious word; but *Grace* thinketh on that which is everlaſting, and cleaveth not to temporall things; ſhe is not troubled with loſſes, nor diſquieted with hard words; for that ſhe hath placed her treaſure and joy in heaven, where nothing periſheth.

4. *Nature* is covetous, and doth more willingly receive then give, ſhe loveth proper and private things; but *Grace* is bountifull and liberall to all; ſhunneth private intereſt, is content with a little

tle, thinketh that it is more blessed to give then to receive. *Nature* is bent to the creatures, to her own flesh, to vanities, and to many vagaries: but *Grace* draweth unto God and unto goodnesse, renounceth creatures, flieth the world, hateth the desires of the flesh, restraineth wandrings abroad, blusheth to be seen in publick; *Nature* is willing to have some outward comfort, wherein she may be sensibly delighted: but *Grace* seeketh comfort in God alone, and delighteth above all visible things in the highest good.

5. *Nature* worketh all for her own gain and profit, she can do nothing freely, but for bestowed benefits she hopeth to obtain either that which is equall, or better, either praise or favour, and coveteth to have her works and gifts much esteemed: but *Grace* seeketh no temporall thing, nor desireth any other reward then God alone; nor asketh more of tem-

temporall neceſſaries, then what may ſerve her for the obtaining of things eternall.

6. *Nature* rejoyceth to have many friends and kinsfolks, ſhe glorieth of noble place and birth; pleaſeth the powerfull, fawneth upon the rich, applaudeth thoſe that are like herſelf: but *Grace* loveth even her enemies, and is not puffed up with multitude of friends; nor eſteemeth place or birth, but where it is joyned with greater virtue; ſhe rather favoureth the poor then the rich; hath more compaſſion of the innocent then the powerfull; rejoyceth in the true, not in the deceitfull; alwayes exhorteth good men to labour for the better gifts, and by goodneſſe to reſemble the Son of God. *Nature* quickly complaineth of want and trouble: *Grace* conſtantly endureth need.

7. *Nature* referreth all things to her ſelf, ſtriveth and contendeth for herſelf: but *Grace* reduceth all

to God, from whence originally they proceed: she ascribeth no good to her self, neither doth she arrogantly presume: she contendeth not, nor preferreth her opinion before others; but in every apprehension and opinion submitteth her self unto the eternall wisdome and to the divine judgement. *Nature* coveteth to know secrets, and to hear news; she will appear abroad, and make proof of many things by her own senses; she desireth to be known, and to do those things, for which she may be praised and admired; but *Grace* careth not for hearing news, nor to understand curious matters; for that all this springeth from the old corruption of man, seeing here is nothing new and durable upon earth. She teacheth therefore to restrain the senses, to avoid vain pleasing and ostentation, humbly to hide those things that are worthy of praise and admiration; and of every thing and every know-

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ledge to seek profitable fruit, and the praise and honour of God: she will not have her self nor hers publickly praised, but desireth that God should be blessed in his gifts, who of mere love bestoweth all things.

8. This *Grace* is a supernaturall light, and a certain speciall gift of God, and the proper mark of the elect, and pledge of everlasting salvation; which raiseth up a man from earthly things to love the things of heaven, and of a carnall maketh him a spirituall man. How much the more therefore *Nature* is depressed and subdued, so much the greater *grace* is infused, and the inward man daily by new visitations more reformed according to the image of God.

CHAP. LV.

Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of divine Grace.

CHRISTIAN. O Lord my God, who hast created me after

thy Image and likeneſſe, grant me this grace which thou haſt ſhewed to be ſo great and ſo neceſſary to ſalvation, that I may overcome my wicked nature, which draweth me to ſin and to perdition. For I feel in my fleſh the law of ſin, contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the obeying of ſenſuality in many things: neither can I reſiſt the paſſions thereof, unleſſe thy moſt holy grace fervently infuſed into my heart, do aſſiſt me.

2. Thy grace, O Lord, and great grace is needfull, that nature may be overcome, which is ever prone to evil from her youth. For by Adam the firſt man, nature being fallen and corrupted by ſin, the penalty of this ſtain hath deſcended upon all mankind, in ſuch ſort, that nature it ſelf which by thee was created good and upright is now accounted for the ſinne and for the infirmity of corrupted nature; for that the motion thereof

left unto it self draweth to evil and to inferiour things. For the little power which remaineth, is like a certain spark lying hidden in ashes. This is naturall reason it self, encompassed about with great darkness, yet still retaining power to discern good and evil, and the difference between true and false; although it be unable to fulfill all that it approveth; and enjoyeth not now the full light of truth, nor the soundnesse of her affections.

3. Hence it is, my God, that after the inward man I delight in thy law, knowing thy commandments to be good, just, and holy, reproving also all evil and sin, teaching that it is to be avoided. But with the flesh I serve the law of sin, whilst I rather obey sensuality then reason. Hence it is that to will to do good is present with me, but how to perform it I find not. For this cause I often purpose many good things, but because I want grace to help my weakness, upon a light

resistance I go back and faint. Hence it is that I know the way of perfection, and see clearly enough what I ought to doe; but pressed down with the weight of mine own corruption, I rise not unto what is more perfect.

4. O Lord, how exceeding needfull is thy grace for me, to begin any good work, to go forward, and to accomplish it? For without it I can do nothing, but in thee I can do all things, when thy grace doth strengthen me. O heavenly grace indeed, without which our most worthy actions are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be esteemed. Arts, riches, beautie or strength, wit or eloquence, are of no value with thee, O Lord, without thy grace. For gifts of nature are common to good and bad; but the peculiar gift of the elect is grace and love; and they that bear this honourable mark, are esteemed worthy of everlasting life. This grace is so eminent, that neither the

the gift of propheſie, nor the working of miracles; nor any ſpeculation (how high ſoever) is of any eſteem without it. Neither faith, nor hope, nor other virtues are acceptable unto thee without love and grace.

5. O moſt bleſſed Grace, that makeſt the poor in ſpirit rich in virtues, and makeſt the rich in many bleſſings to be humble in heart; come, come down unto me, repleniſh me early with thy comfort, leſt my ſoul ſhould faint for wearineſſe and drineſſe of mind. I beſeech thee, O Lord, that I may find grace in thy ſight; for thy grace is ſufficient for me, though other things that nature deſireth be wanting. If I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not fear any evils, whileſt thy grace is with me: that is my ſtrength; that giveth adviſe and help; that is ſtronger then all enemies, and wiſer then all the wiſe.

6. Thy grace is the miſtreſſe of

truth, the teacher of discipline, the light of the heart, the solace in affliction, the driver away of sorrow, the expeller of fear, the nurse of devotion, the mother of tears. What am I without it, but a withered piece of wood, and an unprofitable stalk only meet to be cast away? Let thy grace therefore, O Lord, alwaies prevent me and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good works, through Iesus Christ thy Son, Amen.

CHAP. LVI.

That we ought to deny our selves, and imitate Christ by the Crosse.

CHRIST. Son, look how much thou goest out of thy self, so much maiest thou enter into me. As to be void of all desire of externall things, maketh inward peace; so the forsaking of our selves inwardly, joyneth us to God. I will have thee learn the perfect leaving of thy self to my will, without contradiction and complaint. Follow me, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Life. Without the way there is no going aright, without truth there is no knowledge, without life there is no living. I am the way which thou oughteſt to follow; the truth which thou oughteſt to truſt; the life for which thou oughteſt to hope. I am the way inviolable, the truth infallible, the life which cannot end. I am the moſt ſtraight way, the ſupreme truth, the true life, yea the bleſſed life, the uncreated life. If thou remain in my way thou ſhalt keep the truth, and the truth ſhall make thee free, & thou ſhalt lay hold on everlaſting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: if thou wilt know the truth, believe me. If thou wilt be perfect, ſell all. If thou wilt be my Diſciple, deny thy ſelf. If thou wilt poſſeſſe a bleſſed life, deſpiſe this preſent life. If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thy ſelf upon earth. If thou wilt reign with me, bear the croſſe with me. For only the ſervants of the

crosse find the way of bliss and true light.

3. CHRISTIAN. Lord Iesus, forasmuch as thy way is narrow and contemptible unto the world, grant me grace to imitate thee in suffering worldly contempt. For the servant is not greater then his Lord, nor the Disciple above his Master. Let thy servant be exercised in thy holy life, for therein my salvation and the true holiness doth consist: whatsoever I read or hear besides it, doth not recreate or delight me fully.

4. CHRIST. Son, now that thou knowest and hast read these things, happy shalt thou be, if thou do them. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him, and will make him sit with me in the Kingdome of my Father.

CHRISTIAN. Lord Iesus, as thou hast said and promised, so let

let it come to passe, and grant that I may not wholly undeserve this favour. I have received the crosse, I have received it from thy hand; I will bear it, and bear it till death, as thou hast laid it upon me. Truly the life of a good retired person is the crosse; but yet it is a guide to Paradise. It is now begun, it is not lawfull to go back, neither is it fit to leave that which I have undertaken.

5. Let us then take courage, my Brethren, and go forwards together Iesus will be with us. For Iesus's sake we have undertaken this crosse; for Iesus's sake let us persevere in the crosse. He will be our helper, who is our guide and forerunner. Behold our King goeth before us, who also will fight for us: let us follow him manfully, let none be dismaid; but be we ready to die valiantly in the battel, and let us not blemish our glory by flying from the Crosse.

CHAP.

Chap. LVII.

That a man be not too much dejected, when he faleth into some defects.

Christ. Son, patience and humility in adversities are more pleasing to me, then much comfort and devotion in prosperities. Why art thou grieved for every little trifle spoken and done against thee? Although it had been much more, thou oughtest not to have been moved. But now let it passe; it is not the first that hath happened, nor is it any new thing, neither shall it be the last, if thou live long. Thou art manly enough, as long as no adversity happeneth. Thou canst give good counsell also, and canst strengthen others with thy words: but when any tribulation suddenly comes to thy door, thou art destitute of counsell and strength. See therefore thy great frailty, which thou often hast experience of in every small occurrence. It is notwithstanding intended for thy good,

good, when these and such like things befall thee.

2. Put it out of thy heart the best thou canst, and if it touch thee, yet let it not deject thee, nor trouble thee long; bear it at least patiently, if thou canst not joyfully. Although thou be unwilling to hear it, and conceivest indignation thereat, yet restrain thy self, and suffer no inordinate word to passe out of thy mouth, whereby the little ones may be offended. The storm which now is raised shall quickly be appeased, and inward grief shall be sweetned by the return of grace. I yet live, saith the Lord, and am ready to help thee, and to give thee greater comfort then before, if thou put thy trust in me and callest devoutly upon me.

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy self to greater suffering. All is not lost, if thou feel thy self often afflicted or grievously tempted. Thou art a man, and not God: thou

thou art flesh, not an Angel. How canst thou look to continue ever in the same state of virtue, when an Angel in heaven hath fallen, as also the first man in Paradise? I am he who will strengthen with health them that mourn, and do raise up unto divine glory those that know their own infirmity.

4. CHRISTIAN. Lord, blessed be thy word, more sweet unto my mouth then the hony and the hony-comb. What should I do in these my so great tribulations and straits, unless thou didst comfort me with thy holy words? What matter is it, how much, and what I suffer, so as I may at length attain to the port of salvation; Grant me a good end, grant me a happy passage out of this world. Be mindfull of me, O my God, and direct me the right way to thy Kingdome. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVIII.

Of not searching into high matters, and into the secret judgements of God.

CHRIST. Son, beware thou dispute not of high matters, nor of the secret judgements of God, why this man is left, and that man taken into so great favour: why also this man is so much afflicted, & that man so greatly advanced. These things are beyond the reach of man, neither can any reason or disputation search out the judgement of God. When the Enemie therefore suggesteth these things unto thee, or some curious people enquire of thee, answer that of the Prophet, *Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgement is right.* And again, *The judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.* My judgements are to be feared, not to be discussed; for they are such as cannot be comprehended by the understanding of man.

2. In

2. In like manner I advise thee not to enquire, nor dispute of the merits of the Saints, which of them is holier then the other, and which is greater in the Kingdome of heaven. These things oftentimes breed strife and unprofitable contentions, they nourish also pride and vain glory; from whence do spring envie and dissentions, whilst one will proudly preferre this, and the other, another. To desire to know and search out such things, is to no purpose; nor would it please the Saints; for I am not the God of dissention, but of peace: which peace consisteth rather in true humilitie, then in self-exaltation.

3. Some are carried with zeal of affection, to love these or those most: but this love is rather humane then divine. I am He who made all the Saints, and have given them grace: I have given them glory. I know what every one hath deserved; I have prevented them with the blessings of my goodnesse.

foreknew my beloved before the beginning of the world. I chose them out of the world, they chose not me first. I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through sundrie temptations. I have powred into them glorious comforts, I have given them perseverance, I have crowned their patience.

4. I know both the first and the last: I embrace all with inestimable love. I am to be praised in all my Saints: I am to be blessed above all things, and to be honoured in every one, whom I have thus gloriously exalted and predestinated without any precedent merits of their own. He therefore that contemneth one of the least of my Saints, honoureth not the greatest; for that I made both the lesse and the greater: And he that dispraiseth any of my Saints, dispraiseth also me, and all the rest in the Kingdome of heaven. There all are one through the bond of Love; they think

think the same, they will the same, and they all love one another.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they love me more then themselves or any merits of their own. For being ravished above themselves, and drawn out of all self-love, they are wholly carried out to love me, in whom also they do fruitively rest. Nothing can turn them back, nothing can presse them down; for being full of the eternall Truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable love. Let therefore carnall and naturall men who can affect no other but their private joyes, forbear to dispute of the state of Saints. They adde and take away according to their own fancies, not as it pleaseth the eternall Truth.

6. Many are ignorant, but specially those that be slenderly enlightned; and these can seldome love any with a perfect spirituall love. They are as yet much drawn by a naturall affection and humane friend-

friendſhip to this man or to that; and according to the experience they have of themſelves in their earthly affections, ſo they frame an imagination of heavenly things. But there is an incomparable diſtance between the things which the imperfect ones imagine in their conceits, and thoſe which the illuminated ones do ſee by revelation from above.

7. Beware therefore, my Son, that thou treat not curiouſly of theſe things, which exceed thy knowledge: but rather ſo apply thy endeavours, that thou maiſt at leaſt have the meaneſt place in the Kingdome of heaven. And if any one did know which of the Saints exceeded others in ſanctity, or were greater in the Kingdome of heaven; what would this knowledge avail him, unleſſe he ſhould thereby humble himſelf the more in my ſight, and ſhould riſe up into the greater praiſing of my name? He pleaſeth God much better, that thinketh

thinketh of the greatneſſe of his ſinnes, and the ſmallneſſe of his graces, and how farre off he is from the perfection of the Saints; than he that diſputeth of their greatneſſe or littleneſſe.

8. They are well and right well contented, if men could content themſelves and refrain from theſe vain diſcourſes. They glory not of their own merits, for they aſcribe no good unto themſelves, but attribute all to me, who of my infinite love have given them all things. They are filled with ſo great love of the Divinity, and with ſuch an overflowing joy, that there is no glory nor happineſſe, that is or can be wanting unto them. All the Saints, how much the higher they be in glory, ſo much the more humble they are in themſelves, and nearer and dearer unto me: And therefore it is written, That they did caſt their Crowns before God, and fell down upon their face before the Lamb, and adored him that

that liveth for ever and ever.

9. Many inquire who is greateſt in the Kingdome of God, that know not whether they ſhall ever be numbred there amongſt the leaſt. It is a great thing to be even the leaſt in heaven, where all are great: for that all there ſhall be called, and ſhall be indeed, the Sons of God. *The leaſt ſhall become a thouſand; and the ſinner of an hundred years ſhall die.* For when the Diſciples asked who ſhould be greateſt in the Kingdome of heaven, they received this anſwer, Unleſſe you be converted, and become as little children, you ſhall not enter into the Kingdome of heaven: Whoſoever therefore ſhall humble himſelf as this little child, the ſame is greateſt in the Kingdome of heaven.

10. Wo be unto them that diſdain to humble themſelves willingly with little children. For the low gate of the Kingdome of heaven will not give them entrance.

And

And wo be to the rich, that have their comforts here: for whileſt the poor enter into the Kingdome of God, they ſhall ſtand lamenting without. Rejoyce you that be humble, and you that be poor be you glad, for yours is the Kingdome of God, if you walk according to the truth.

CHAP. LIX.

That all our hope and truſt is to be fixed in God alone.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, what truſt have I in this life? Or what is the greateſt comfort, that all things under heaven do yield me? Is it not thou, my Lord God, whoſe mercies are without number? Where hath it been well with me without thee? Or when could it be ill with me, when thou wert preſent? I had rather be poor for thee, then rich without thee. I rather chooſe to be a pilgrime on earth with thee, then to poſſeſſe heaven without thee. Where thou

are

art, there is heaven: and there is death and hell, where thou art not. Thou art my desire, and therefore it behoveth me to sigh and cry and pray unto thee. For I have none fully to trust in, none that can seasonably help me in my necessities, but thee alone, my God. Thou art my hope, thou art my trust; thou art my comforter, and most faithfull unto me in all things.

2. All men seek their own gain; thou onely seekest my salvation and my profit, & turnest all things to my good. Although thou exposest me to divers temptations and adversities, yet thou ordereſt all this to my advantage, who art wont to try thy beloved ones a thousand wayes. In which triall thou oughtest no lesse to be loved and praised, then if thou didst fill me with heavenly comforts.

3. In thee therefore, O Lord God, I put my whole hope and refuge: in thee I place my tribulation and anguish; for I find all to be

be weak and unconstant, whatsoever I behold out of thee. For neither can many friends avail, nor strong helpers aid, nor wise counsellours give any profitable answer, nor the books of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliver, nor any secret or pleasant place defend if thou thy self dost not assist, help strengthen, comfort, instruct, and keep us.

4. For all things that seem to belong to the attainment of peace and felicity, without thee are nothing, and do bring indeed no felicity at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, the height of life, the depth of wisdome: and the strongest comfort of thy servants is to trust in thee above all things. To thee therefore do I lift up mine eyes: in thee O my God, the Father of mercies, I put my trust. Blesse and sanctifie my soul with thy heavenly blessings, that it may be made thy holy habitation, and the seat of thy eternall glory:

and

and that nothing may be found in the Temple of thy glory, that may offend the eyes of thy Majesty. According to the greatnesse of thy goodnesse, and multitude of thy mercies look upon me, and hear the prayer of thy poor servant, who is far exiled from thee in the land of the shadow of death. Protect and keep the soul of thy servant, amidst so many dangers of this corruptible life, and by thy grace accompanying me direct it by the way of peace, to the countrey of everlasting light. Amen.

THE FOURTH BOOK

A devout Exhortation unto the holy Communion.

The voice of Christ.

COme unto me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you, saith the Lord. The bread which I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world. Take ye and eat, this is my body that is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my bloud, dwelleth in me, and I in him. The words which I have spoken unto you, are spirit and life.

CHAP. I.

With how great reverence Christ ought to be received.

The voice of the Disciple

THese are thy words, O Christ the everlasting Truth, though not spoken all at one time, nor written in one and the self-same place. Because therefore they are thine and true, they are all thankfully and faithfully to be received by me. They are thine, and thou hast spoken them; and they are mine also, because thou hast spoken them for my salvation. I willingly receive them from thy mouth, that they may be the deeper imprinted in my heart. These so gracious words, so full of sweetnesse and love, do encourage me, but mine own offences do dishearten me, and my impure conscience driveth me back from the receiving of so great mysteries. The sweetnesse of thy words doth encourage

me, but the multitude of my sins doth oppresse me.

2. Thou commandest me to come confidently unto thee, if I will have part with thee; and to receive the food of immortality, if I desire to obtain everlasting life and glory. Come, saist thou, unto me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you. O sweet and loving word in the eare of a sinner, that thou, my Lord God, shouldest invite the poor and needie to the participation of thy most holy bodie. But who am I, Lord, that I may presume to approch unto thee? behold the heavens cannot contain thee, and thou saist, Come ye all unto me.

3. What meaneth this so gracious a condescention, and this so loving invitation? How shall I dare to come, that know not any good in my self, whereupon I may presume? How shall I bring thee unto my house, that have so often offended thy most gracious countenance?

tenance? The Angels and the Archangels honour thee, the Saints and just men do fear thee; and saist thou, Come ye all unto me? Unlesse thou, O Lord, didst say it, who would believe it to be true? And unlesse thou didst command it, who would attempt to come unto thee? Behold Noah a just man laboured a hundred years in the making of the Ark, that he might be saved with a few; and how can I in one houres space prepare my self to receive with reverence the Maker of the world?

4. Moses thy great servant, and thy especiall friend, made an Ark of incorruptible wood, which also he covered with most pure Gold, to put the Tables of the Law therein: and I a corruptible creature, how shall I dare so lightly to receive the Maker of the Law, and the giver of life? Solomon the wisest of the Kings of Israel bestowed seven years in building a magnificent Temple to the praise of thy

name, and celebrated the feast o the Dedication thereof eight daye together: he offered a thousand peace-offerings, and he solemnly set the Ark in the place prepared for it, with the sound of trumpets, and joy; and I the most miserable and poorest of men, how shall I bring thee into my house, that can scarce spend one half hour religiously? and I wish I could once spend about one half houre in a worthy and due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they endeavour to please thee. and alas how little is that which I do! How little time do I spend to prepare my self to receive! I am seldome wholly recollected, very seldome free from all distraction; and yet surely no unbecoming thought ought to appear in the comfortable presence of thy Deity, nor any creature wholly take me up: for I am not to harbour an Angel, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is great difference

rence between the Ark of the Covenant with it's reliques, and thy moſt pure body with it's unſpeakable virtues: between thoſe legall ſacrifices, figures of future things, and the true Sacrifice of thy body, the complement of all ancient Sacrifices. Why therefore am I not more zealous in thy venerable preſence? Wherefore do I not prepare my ſelf with greater care to receive thy holy things; ſith thoſe holy ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, yea Kings alſo and Princes, with the whole people, have ſhewed ſuch an affectionateneſſe of devotion to thy divine ſervice?

7. The moſt devout King David danced before the Ark of God with all his might, calling to mind the benefits beſtowed in times paſt upon his Forefathers. He made Inſtruments of ſundrie kinds, he publiſhed Pſalmes, and appointed them to be ſung with joy: he alſo oftentimes ſung to the harp, being inſpired with the grace of the holy

Ghost. He taught the people of Israel to praise God with their whole heart, and with pleasant voices every day to blesse & praise him. If so great devotion was then used, and such celebrating of divine praise before the Ark of the Testament; what reverence and devotion is now to be performed by me and all Christian people, at the Sacrament, in receiving the most precious body of Christ?

9. O God the invisible Creatour of the world, how wonderfully dost thou deal with us! how sweetly and graciously dost thou dispose of all things with thine elect, to whom thou offerest thy self to be received in the Sacrament! O this exceedeth all understanding! This chiefly draweth the hearts of the religious, and inflameth their affections. For thy true faithfull servants that dispose their whole life to amendment, by this most precious Sacrament oftentimes gain much of the grace of devotion, & love of holiness.

10. O

10. O the admirable and hidden grace of this Sacrament, which only the faithfull ones of Christ do know: but the unbelieving, and such as are slaves unto sin, cannot have experience thereof! In this Sacrament spirituall grace is given, and strength which was lost is restored in the soul, and the beauty disfigured by sin returneth again. This grace is sometimes so great, that out of the fulnesse of devotion which is here given, not onely the mind, but the weak body also, feeleth great increase of strength.

11. Our coldnesse & negligence surely is much to be bewailed and pittied, that we are not drawn with greater affection to receive Christ, in whom all the hope and merit of those that are to be saved doth consist. For he is our sanctification and redemption: he is the comfort of those who are here but travellers, and the everlasting fruition of Saints. It is much therefore to

be lamented that many do so little consider this comfortable mysterie, which rejoyceth heaven, and preserveth the whole world. O the blindnesse and hardnesse of mans heart, that doth not more deeply weigh so unspeakable a gift; but rather cometh by the daily use thereof to regard it little or nothing.

12. For if this most holy Sacrament should be celebrated in one place onely, and consecrated by one onely Minister in the world; with how great desire dost thou think would men be affected to that place, and to such a Minister, that they might enjoy the celebration of these divine mysteries? But now there are many Ministers, and Christ is offered in many places; that so the grace and love of God to man may appear so much the greater, how much the more this sacred Communion is spread through the world. Thanks be unto thee good Iesus, the everlasting shepheard that hast vouchsafed to refresh

refresh us who are poor and in a state of banishment, with thy precious body and bloud, and to invite us to the receiving of these mysteries with the words of thy own mouth, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour & are burdened, and I will refresh you.

CHAP. II.

That the great goodnesse and love of God is exhibited to man in this Sacrament.

The voice of the Disciple.

IN confidence of thy goodnesse and great mercy, O Lord, being sick, I approch unto my Saviour, being hungrie and thirstie to the fountain of life, needie to the King of heaven, a servant unto my Lord, a creature to my Creatour, being disconsolate I come to thee my mercifull Comforter. But whence is this to me, that thou vouchsafest to come unto me? Who am I that thou shouldest give thy self unto me?

me? How dare a sinner appear before thee? And how is it that thou dost vouchsafe to come unto a sinner? Thou knowest thy servant, & seest that he hath no good thing in him, for which thou shouldest bestow this favour upon him. I confesse therefore my unworthinesse, and I acknowledge thy goodnesse; I praise thy mercy, and give thee thanks for this thy transcendent love. For thou doest this for thine own sake, not for any merits of mine; to the end that thy goodnesse may be better known unto me, thy love more abundantly shewed, and thy gracious condescention may be the more eminently set forth. Since therefore it is thy pleasure, and thou hast commanded that it should be so, this thy favour is also dearly pleasing to me, and I wish that my sins may be no hinderance herein.

2. O most sweet and benigne Jesus, how great reverence & thanks together with perpetuall praise; is due

due unto thee for the receiving of thy ſacred bodie, whoſe precioufneſſe no man is able to expreſſe! But what ſhall I think of at this Communion, now that I am to approch unto my Lord, whom I am not able duely to honour, and yet I deſire to receive him with devotion? What can I think better, and more profitable, then to humble my ſelf wholly before thee, and to exalt thy infinite goodneſſe above me? I praiſe thee my God, and will exalt thee for ever; and I do deſpiſe, and ſubmit my ſelf unto thee, in a deep ſenſe of my own unworthineſſe.

3. Behold thou art the Holy of Holies, and I the skum of ſinners! Behold thou incline ſt unto me, who am not worthy ſo much as to look up unto thee! Behold thou come ſt unto me! it is thy will to be with me, thou invite ſt me to thy banquet. Thou wilt give me the food of heaven, and bread of Angels to eat, which is no other in-

indeed then thy self, the living bread, that descendest from heaven, and giveſt life unto the world.

4. Behold from whence doth this love proceed! what a gracious condescention of thine appeareth herein! How great thanks and praises are due unto thee for these benefits! O how good and profitable was thy counsell, when thou ordainedst it! How sweet and pleasant the banquet, when thou gavest thy self to be our food! How wonderfull is this thy doing. O Lord, how mighty is thy power, how unspeakable is thy truth! For thou saidst the word, and all things were made; and this was done which thou commandedst.

5. A thing of great admiration, that thou, my Lord God, true God and Man, shouldest be exhibited unto us by the elements of bread and wine. Thou who art the Lord of all things, and standest in need of none, hast pleased to dwell in us by

by means of this thy Sacrament: preſerve my heart and body unſpotted, that with a chearfull and pure conſcience I may often celebrate thy myſteries, and receive them to my everlaſting health; which thou haſt chiefly ordained and inſtituted for thy honour, and for a perpetuall memoriall.

6. Rejoyce, O my ſoul, and give thanks unto God for ſo noble a gift, and ſo ſingular a comfort left unto thee in this vale of tears. For as often as thou calleſt to mind this myſtery, and receiveſt the body of Chriſt; ſo often doſt thou remember the work of thy redemption, and art made partaker of all the merits of Chriſt. For the love of Chriſt is never diminiſhed, and the greatneſſe of his propitiation is never exhauſted. Therefore thou oughteſt alwaies to diſpoſe thy ſelf hereunto by a freſh renewing of thy mind, and to weigh with attentive conſideration this great myſtery of thy ſalvation. So great, new

new, and joyfull it ought to seem unto thee, when thou comest to these holy mysteries; as if the same day Christ first descending into the womb of the Virgin, were become man; or hanging on the crosse did suffer and die for the salvation of mankind.

Chap. III.

That it is profitable to communicate often.

The voice of the Disciple.

Behold, O Lord, I come unto thee, that I may be comforted in thy gift, and be delighted in thy holy banquet, which thou, O God, hast prepared in thy goodnesse for the poor. Behold in thee is all whatsoever I can or ought to desire: thou art my salvation and my redemption, my hope and my strength, my honour and my glory. Make joyfull therefore this day the soul of thy servant, for that I have lifted it up to thee, O Lord Iesus. I desire

desire to receive thee now with devotion and reverence. I do long to bring thee into my house, that with Zacheus I may obtain to be blessed by thee, and to be numbred amongst the children of Abraham. My soul thirsteth to receive thy body, my heart desireth to be united with thee.

2. Give thy self to me, and it sufficeth: for besides thee no comfort is available. I cannot be without thee, nor live without thy visitation. And therefore I must often come unto thee, and receive thee for the welfare of my soul; lest perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprived of thy heavenly food. For so, most mercifull Iesus, thou once didst say, preaching to the people and curing sundry diseases, *I will not send them home fasting, lest they faint in the way.* Deal thou therefore in like manner now with me, who hast vouchsafed to leave thy self in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithfull. For thou art

the sweet refection of the soul; & he that eateth thee worthily, shall be partaker and heir of everlasting glory. It is necessary for me, that do so often fall and sin, and so quickly wax dull and faint, that by frequent prayer and confession, and receiving of thy holy body, I renew, cleanse, and inflame my self; lest perhaps by long abstaining I should fall from my holy purpose.

3 For the imaginations of man are prone unto evil from his youth, and unless some divine remedie help him, he quickly slideth to worse. This holy Communion therefore draweth back from evil, and strengtheneth in good. For if I be now so often slack and cold when I communicate, or celebrate; what would become of me if I received not this remedy, and sought not after so great an help? Though every day I be not fit, nor well prepared to communicate; I will endeavour notwithstanding at due times

times to receive the divine myſteries, and to be partaker of ſo great a grace. For this is one chief comfort of a faithfull ſoul, whileſt ſhe wandereth from thee in this mortall body, that being often mindfull of her God, ſhe receive her beloved with a devout mind.

4. O the wonderfull condeſcent of thy mercy toward us, that thou O Lord God, the Creatour and giver of life to all ſpirits, doſt vouchſafe to come unto a poor ſoul, and with thy whole Deitie and Humanitie to repleniſh her hunger! O happy mind and bleſſed ſoul, that obtains to receive thee, her Lord God, with devout affection, and in receiving of thee to be filled with ſpirituall joy! O how great a Lord doth ſhe entertain! How beloved a gueſt doth ſhe harbour! how pleaſant a companion doth ſhe receive! how faithfull a friend doth ſhe take in! how lovely and noble a ſpouſe doth ſhe embrace! She embraceth

him

him who is to be loved above all that is beloved, and above all things that may be desired. Let heaven and earth and all their furniture be silent in thy presence: for what praise and beauty soever they have, it is received from thy bounty, and shall not equall the beauty of thy name, whose wisdome is infinite.

Chap. IV.

That many benefits are bestowed upon them that communicate devoutly.

The voice of the Disciple.

MY Lord God, prevent thy servant with the blessings of thy sweetnesse, that I may approch worthily and devoutly to thy glorious Sacrament: stir up my heart unto thee, and deliver me from all dulnesse: visit me with thy salvation, that I may taste in spirit thy sweetnesse, which plentifully lieth hid in this Sacrament, as in a fountain.

tain. Enlighten alſo my eyes to behold ſo great a myſterie, and ſtrengthen me to believe it with undoubted faith. For it is thy work, and not mans power; thy ſacred inſtitution, not mans invention. For no man is of himſelf able to comprehend and underſtand theſe things, which ſurpaſſe the underſtanding even of Angels. What therefore ſhall I unworthy ſinner, duſt and aſhes, be able to ſearch and comprehend of ſo high and ſacred a myſterie.

2. O Lord in the ſimplicity of my heart, with a good and firm faith, and at thy commandment, I come unto thee with hope and reverence, and do truly believe that thou art preſent in the Sacrament. Thy will is, that I receive thee, and that by love I unite my ſelf unto thee. Wherefore I implore thy mercy, and do crave thy ſpeciall grace, to the end I may wholly melt and flow over with love unto thee, and hereafter never harbour any exter-

nall

nall comfort. For this moſt high and worthy Sacrament is the health of the ſoul and body, the remedy of all ſpirituall weakneſſe: hereby my vices are cured, my paſſions bridled, temptations overcome or weakned, greater grace is infuſed, virtue begun increaſed, faith confirmed, hope ſtrengthened, and love inflamed and enlarged.

3. For thou haſt beſtowed, and ſtill oftentimes doſt beſtow, many benefits in this Sacrament upon thy beloved ones that communicate devoutly, O my God, the Protector of my ſoul, the ſtrengthner of humane frailty, and the giver of all inward comfort. Thou imparteſt unto them much comfort againſt ſundry tribulations; and lifteſt them up from the depth of their own dejectedneſſe, to hope in thy protection; and doſt inwardly refreſh and illuſtrate them with new grace, ſo that they who before Communion felt themſelves heavy and indiſpoſed, afterwards being

being refreshed with heavenly meat and drink, do find in themselves a great change to the better. And in such a way of dispensation thou dealest with thy elect, that they may truly acknowledge and patiently prove, how great their own infirmity is, and what goodnesse and grace they receive from thee. For they of themselves are cold, dull and undevout; but by thee they are made fervent, cheerfull, and full of devotion. For who is there, that approching humbly unto the fountain of sweetnesse, doth not carry away from thence at least some little sweetnesse? Or who standing by a great fire, receiveth not some small heat thereby? Thou art a fountain alwayes full and overflowing, a fire ever burning and never decaying.

4. Wherefore if I cannot draw out of the full fountain it self, nor drink my fill; I will notwithstanding set my lips to the mouth of this heavenly conduit, that I may draw

draw from thence at least some small drop to refresh my thirst that so I may not be wholly dried up. And though I be not altogether heavenly, not so inflamed as the Cherubins and Seraphins, notwithstanding I will endeavour to apply my self to devotion, and prepare my heart to obtain some small spark of divine fire, by humble receiving of this enlivening Sacrament. And whatsoever is hereunto wanting in me, good Iesus, most holy Saviour, do thou supply for me, most bountifully and graciously, who hast vouchsafed to call us unto thee, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

5. I indeed labour in the sweat of my brows, I am vexed with grief of heart, I am burdened with sins, I am troubled with temptations, I am intangled and oppressed with many evil passions; and there is none to help me, none to deliver and save me, but thou, O Lord, my

my Saviour, to whom I commit my self, and all that is mine, that thou maiest keep me and bring me to life everlasting. Receive me to the honour and glory of thy name, who hast prepared thy Body and Bloud to be my meat and my drink. Grant, Lord God, my Saviour, that by frequenting thy mysteries, the zeal of my devotion may increase.

CHAP. V.

Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and Ministeriall function.

The voice of Christ.

IF thou hadst Angelicall purity, and the sanctity of S. Iohn Baptist, thou wert not worthy to receive this Sacrament. For it is not within the compasse of the deserts of men, that man should consecrate the Sacrament of Christ, and receive for food the bread of Angels. A great mystery, and great

is the dignity of the Ministers of God, to whom is given that which is not given to the Angels. It is proper for Ministers rightly instituted in the Church, to have power to celebrate, and consecrate the body of Christ. The Priest is the Minister of God, using the word of God, by Gods commandment and appointment; but God is there the principall Authour, and invisible Worker; to whom is subject all that he pleaseth, and all that he commandeth doth obey.

2. Thou oughtest therefore more to believe God Almighty in this most excellent Sacrament, then thine own sense, or any visible signe. And therefore thou art to come unto this Mystery with fear and reverence. Consider attentively with thy self, and see what that is, whereof the Ministery is delivered unto thee by the imposition of the hands of the Bishop. Behold thou art made a Priest

Prieſt, and conſecrated to celebrate: ſee now that in due time thou doeſt this faithfully and devoutly, and carry thy ſelfſo, as thou maiſt be without reproof. Thou haſt not lightned thy burden, but art now bound with a ſtraiter band of diſcipline, and art obliged to a more perfect degree of ſanctity. A Miniſter ought to be adorned with all graces, and to give example of good life to others. His converſation ſhould not be according to the ordinary and common courſe of men, but like to the Angels in heaven, or to perfect men on earth.

3. A Miniſter is the Vicegerent of Chriſt, to pray humbly with a proſtrate mind unto God for himſelf and the whole people. Neither ought he to ceaſe from prayer till he obtain grace and mercy. When a Miniſter doth celebrate, he honoureth God, rejoyceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helpeth the living, and maketh

himself partaker of all good.

CHAP. VI.

An interrogation of the exercise before Communion.

The voice of the Disciple.

WHen I weigh thy worthinesse, O Lord, and my unworthinesse, I tremble, and am confounded in my self. For if I come not unto thee, I flie from life; and if I unworthily intrude my self, I incurre thy displeasure. What therefore shall I do my God, my helper, and my counseller in necessitie?

2. Teach me the right way, appoint me some exercise sutable to this holy Communion. For it is good for me to know how I should reverently and religiously prepare my heart for thee, for the profitable receiving of thy Sacrament, or for the celebrating of so great and divine a Sacrifice.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the discussing of our own conscience and purpose of amendment,

The voice of the beloved.

ABove all things, the Minister of God ought to come to celebrate, and receive this Sacrament with great humilitie of heart, and lowly reverence, with a full faith, and a pious intending of the honour of God. Examine diligently thy conscience, and to thy power purge and cleanse it with true contrition and humble confession: so as there may be nothing in thee, that may be burdensome unto thee, or that may breed in thee remorse of conscience, and hinder thy free accesse. Repent thee of all thy sins in generall, and in particular bewail and lament thy daily offences. And if thou hast time, confesse unto God in the secret of

thy heart, all the evils of thy *disordered* passions.

2. Lament and grieve, that thou art yet so carnall, so worldly, so unmortified in thy passions, so full of the motions of concupiscence, so unwatchfull over thy outward senses, so often intangled with many vain fantasies; so vehemently inclined to outward things, so negligent in the interiour; so prone to laughter and immodesty, so indisposed to tears and compunction; so prompt to ease and pleasures of the flesh, so dull to strictnesse of life and zeal; so curious to hear news and see glorious sights, so slack to imbrace what is humble and low; so covetous of abundance, so niggardly in giving, so fast in keeping; so inconsiderate in speech, so unbridled to silence; so loose in manners, so importune in action; so greedy to meat, so deaf to the word of God; so hasty to rest, so slow to labour; so watchfull to tales,

tales, so drowsie to watch in the service of God, so hasty to the end thereof, so inconstant in attention, so cold in Prayer, so undevout in celebrating so dry in receiving, so quickly distracted, so seldome wholly gathered into thy self, so suddenly moved to anger, so apt to take displeasure against another, so prone to judge, so severe to reprehend, so joyfull in prosperity, so weak in adversity; so often purposing much good, and yet performing little.

3. These and other thy defects being confessed, and bewailed with sorrow and great dislike of thine own infirmity, make a firm purpose alwaies to amend thy life and to endeavour still after a farther progresse in holinesse. Then with full resignation, and with thy whole will, do thou to the honour of my name, offer up thy self a perpetuall sacrifice on the altar of thy heart, faithfully committing thy body and soul unto me, that so

thou maiest come worthily to celebrate this Eucharisticall sacrifice, and to receive profitably the Sacrament of my body.

4. For man hath no oblationmore worthy, nor greater, for the destroying of sin, then to offer up himself unto God purely and wholly in the holy Communion. And when a man shall have done what lieth in him, and shall be truly penitent, and shall come to me for pardon and grace, as I live, saith the Lord, who will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, I will not remember his sins any more, but they shall be all forgiven him.

CHAP.

Chap VIII.

Of the oblation of Christ on the Crosse, and resignation of our selves.

The voice of the Beloved.

AS I willingly offered up my self unto God my Father for thy sins, my hands being stretched forth on the Crosse, and my body naked, so that nothing remained in me that was not wholly turned into a sacrifice for the appeasing of the divine majestie: so oughtest thou also to offer up thy self willingly unto me every day, as a pure and holy oblation, with all thy might and affections, in as hearty a manner as thou canst. What do I require of thee more, then that thou entirely resigne thy self unto me? Whatsoever thou givest besides thy self, is of little account in my sight; for I seek not any gift of thine, but thy self.

2. As it would not suffice thee to have all things whatsoever, be-

sides me; so neither can it please me, whatsoever thou giveſt, if thou offereſt not thy self. Offer up thy self unto me, and give thy self wholly for God, and thy offering shall be acceptable. Behold I offered up my self wholly unto my Father for thee, and gave my whole body and bloud for thy food, that I might be wholly thine, and thou remain mine. But if thou abideſt in thy self, and doſt not offer thy self up freely unto my will; thy oblation is not entire, neither will the union between us be perfect. Therefore a free offering up of thy self into the hands of God, ought to go before all thy actions, if thou wilt obtain freedome and grace. For this cause so few become inwardly free and illuminated, for that they are loth wholly to deny themselves. My saying is undoubtedly true, *Unleſs a man forsake all, he cannot be my Diſciple.* If thou therefore deſireſt to be my Diſciple, offer up thy self unto me with

with thy whole affections.

CHAP. IX.

That we ought to offer up our selves, and all that is ours unto God, and to pray for all.

The voice of the Disciple.

THine, O Lord, are all things that are in heaven, & in earth. I desire to offer up my self unto thee, as a free oblation, and to remain alwaies thine. O Lord, in the simplicity of my heart I offer my self unto thee this day, for a sacrifice of perpetuall praise, to be thy servant for ever. Receive me with this holy oblation of thy precious body; and may this be for my good and the good of all thy people.

2. I offer unto thee, O Lord, all my sins and offences, which I have committed before thee and thy holy Angels, from the day wherein I first could sin, to this hour

hour, upon thy mercifull altar; that thou maist consume and burn them all with the fire of thy love, and wash out all the stains of my sins, and cleanse my conscience from all offences, and restore to me again thy grace, which I lost by sin, forgiving me all my offences, and receiving me mercifully to the kisse of peace.

3. What can I do with my sins, but humbly confesse and bewail them, and intreat alwaies thy favour? I beseech thee, hear me graciously, when I stand before thee my God. All my sins are very displeasing unto me, I will never commit them any more; but I bewail, & will bewail them as long as I live, & am purposed to repent, & according to my utmost power to please thee. Forgive me, O God, forgive me my sins for thy holy names sake: save my soul which thou hast redeemed with thy most precious bloud. Behold I commit my self unto thy mercy,

mercy, I reſigne my ſelf over into thy hands. Do with me according to thy goodneſſe, not according to my wickdneſſe & iniquity.

4. I offer up alſo unto thee all whatſoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou maiſt amend and ſanctify it, that thou maiſt make it gratefull & acceptable unto thee; and alwaies perfect it more and more; and bring me alſo, who am a ſlothfull and unprofitable creature, to a good and bleſſed end.

5. I offer up alſo unto thee all the godly deſires of pious perſons, the neceſſities of parents, friends, brethren, ſiſters, and of all thoſe that are dear unto me, and that have done good either to my ſelf or to others for thy love, and that have deſired and begd of me to pray for them and all theirs: that they all may receive the help of thy grace and comfort, protection from dangers, deliverance from pain; and being freed from all

all evils, may joyfully give worthy thanks unto thee.

6. I offer up also unto thee my prayers, especially for them who have in any thing wronged, grieved, or slandered me, or have done me any damage or displeasure: and for those also, whom I have at any time sadded, troubled, grieved, and scandalized by words or deeds, wittingly or at unawares: that it may please thee to forgive us all our sins and offences, one against another. Take, O Lord, from our hearts all jealousie, indignation, wrath, and contention, and whatsoever may hurt Charity, and lessen brotherly love. Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on those that crave thy mercy: give grace unto them that stand in need thereof, and grant that we may be counted worthy to enjoy thy grace, and attain to life everlasting, Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

That the holy communions is not lightly to be forborn.

The voice of the Beloved.

THOu oughteſt often to have recourſe to the Fountain of grace and of divine mercy, to the Fountain of goodneſſe and of all benignity; that thou maiſt be healed of thy ſins and paſſions, and be made more ſtrong and vigilant againſt all the temptations and deceits of the Devil. The enemy knowing the great good and advantage which comes by the holy Communion, endeavoureth by all means & occaſions to withdraw and hinder faithfull and pious perſons from it.

2. Some when they purpoſe to fit themſelves for the holy Communion, ſuffer worſe aſſaults of the Devil. For that wicked ſpirit (as it is written in Iob) cometh amongſt the Sons of God, to trouble

ble them according to his accustomed malice, or to make them over fearfull and perplexed, that so he may diminish their affection, or by subtile assaults take away their faith, to the end they may either altogether forbear the Communion, or at least come unto it but coldly. But there is no heed to be taken of his frauds and suggestions, be they never so filthy & hideous, but all is to be turned back upon his own head. Thou oughtest to contemn and scorn him a miserable wretch, and not to omit the holy Communion for his assaults, and the troubles which he raiseth.

3. Oftentimes also an excessive care for the obtaining such a degree of devotion, and some anxiety about confessing thy sins hindereth thee. Follow herein the counsell of the wise, and put away all doubt and scruple; for it is an hindrance to the grace of God, & prejudiceth the devotion of the mind,

mind. For every ſmall vexation & trouble omit not the holy Communion, but the ſooner confeſſe thy ſins, and willingly forgive others whatſoever offences they have done againſt thee; and if thou haſt offended any, humbly crave pardon, and God will readily forgive thee.

4. What availeth it to delay long the confeſſion of thy ſins, or to deferre the holy Communion? Purge thy ſelf with ſpeed, ſpit out the venome preſently, make haſte to apply this ſovereign remedy, & thou ſhalt find it to be better with thee, then if thou deferredſt it long. If thou omitteſt it to day for this cauſe, perhaps to morrow ſome greater will fall out; and ſo thou maiſt be hindred a long time from the Communion, & become more unfit. With all poſſible ſpeed ſhake off from thy ſelf all preſent heavineſſe and ſloth, for it will not avail thee to continue long in diſquietneſſe and trouble of mind, and

and for daily occurring impediments to withdraw thy self from the divine mysteries. Yea it is very prejudiciall to deferre the Communion long, for this usually causeth a greater dulnesse and undisposednesse. Alas, some cold and dissolute people do willingly delay confession and deferre the sacred Communion, lest they should be engaged to the greater watch over themselves.

5. O how little is their charity and how weak is their devotion, that so easily omit the holy Communion! How happy is he and acceptable to God, who so ordereth his life, and keepeth his conscience in such purity, that he is ready and fit to communicate every day, if it were convenient and might be done without others taking notice. If one doth sometimes abstain out of humility, or by reason of some lawfull impediment, he is to be commended for the reverence which therein he sheweth.

But

but if it proceedeth of dull slothfullnesse, he must stir himself up, and do what lieth in him; and God will assist his desire for the good will he hath thereto, which God both chiefly respect.

6. And when any lawfull hinderance doth happen, he must yet alwayes have that good will, and pious intention to communicate, and so shall he not lose the fruit of the Sacrament. For every good man may every day and hour profitably and without let receive Christ spiritually: and yet on certain dayes, and at time appointed he ought to receive Sacramentally with an affectionate reverence the body of his Redeemer, and rather seek the honour and glory of God, then his own comfort. For he communicateth mystically and is invisibly fed, as often as he devoutly calleth to mind the mistery of the Incarnation, and the Passion of Christ, and is inflamed with his love.

7. He

7. He that prepareth not himself, but when a Festivall drawes near, and when custome compelleth him thereunto: shall usually be found to be unprepared for it. Blessed is he that offereth himself up as a Sacrifice to the Lord, as often as he doth celebrate or communicate. Be not too long, nor too short in celebrating, but keep the accustomed manner of those with whom thou livest. Thou oughtest not to be tedious & troublesome to others, but to observe the received custome, according to the appointment of thy Superiours: and rather frame thy self to the profit of others, then to thine own devotion or desire.

CHAP. XI.

That the Body of Christ, and the holy Scriptures, are most necessary unto a faithfull soul.

The voice of the Disciple.

O Sweetest Lord Iesus, how great sweetnesse hath an holy soul

ul that feasteth with thee in thy
nquet, where there is set no o-
er food to be eaten but thy self,
r onely beloved, and most to be
sired above all the desires of
r heart! And verily it should be
sweet thing unto me to pour out
ars from the very bottome of my
art in thy presence: and with ho-
Magdalene to wash thy feet
ith my tears. But where is this
evotion? Where is there any so
lentifull shedding of holy tears?
urely in the sight of thee and thy
oly Angels, my whole heart
hould be inflamed & even weep
or joy. For I enjoy thee in the Sa-
rament truly present, though hid-
en under another representa-
ion.

2. For to behold thee in thine
wn divine brightnesse, mine eyes
would not be able to endure it,
neither could the whole world
and in the brightnesse of the glo-
y of thy majesty. I do really en-
oy and adore him, whom the
Angels

Angels adore in heaven; but I, yet in the mean time, by faith they by sight, and without a veil I ought to be content with the light of true faith, and to walk therein, untill the day of everlasting brightnesse break forth, & the shadows of figures passe away. But when that shall come which is perfect, the use of Sacraments shall cease. For the Blessed in heaven glory need not any Sacramental remedy, but rejoyce without end in the presence of God, beholding his glory face to face, and being transformed from glory to glory into the image of the incomprehensible Deity, they tast the Word of God made flesh, as he was from the beginning, and as he remaineth for ever.

3. Whilest I mind these wonderfull things, even all spirituall comfort whatsoever becometh tedious unto me: for that as long as I behold not my Lord openly in his glory, I make no account at all of what-

whatsoever I see or hear in this world. Thou art my witnesse, O God, that nothing can comfort me, no creature can give me rest, but thou my God, whom I desire to behold everlastingly. But this is not possible whilst I remain in this mortall life. Therefore I must frame my self to much patience, and submit my self to thee in all my desires. For thy Saints also, O Lord, who now rejoyce with thee in the Kingdome of heaven, whilst they lived, expected in faith and great patience the coming of thy glory. What they believed, I believe: what they hoped for, I also hope for: whither they are come, I trust I shall come by thy grace. In the mean time, I will go forward in faith, strengthened by the examples of the Saints: I have also godly books for my comfort and for the glasse of my life, and above all these, thy most holy Body for a singular remedy and refuge.

4. For I perceive two things to be

be chiefly necessary for me in this life without which this miserable life would be unsupportable unto me. Whilst I am kept in the prison of this body, I acknowledge my self to stand in need of two things, to wit, food, and light. Thou hast therefore given unto me a weak creature, thy sacred Body for the nourishment of my soul and body; and thou hast set thy word as a light unto my feet: without these two I could not well live. For the word of God is the light of the soul, and thy Sacrament, the bread of life. These also may be called the two tables set on the one side & the other, in the store-house of the holy Church. One is the holy table having the holy bread, that is, the precious body of Christ: the other is that of the divine law, containing holy doctrine, teaching the true faith, and certainly leading to that within the veil, where is the Holy of Holies. Thanks be unto thee Lord

Lord Iesus, the light of everlasting light, for the table of holy doctrine, which thou hast afforded us by thy servants, the Prophets and Apostles and other Teachers.

5. Thanks be unto thee, Creatour and Redeemer of man, who to manifest thy love to the whole world, hast prepared a great supper, wherein thou hast set before us to be eaten (not the typicall Lamb, but) thine own most sacred Body and Bloud, rejoycing all the faithfull with thy holy banquet, and repleniſhing them to the full with thy cup of salvation, in which are all the delights of Paradise; and the holy Angels do feast with us, but yet with a more happy sweetnesse.

6. O how great and honourable is the office of Gods Ministers, to whom it is given with sacred words to consecrate (the Sacrament of) the Lord of glory; with their lips to blesse, with their hands to hold, with their mouth to receive, and also to administer to others! O

how clean ought to be those hands, how pure that mouth, how holy that body, how unspotted that heart, where the Authour of purity so often entreth! Nothing but what is holy, no word but good and profitable ought to proceed from his mouth, which so often receiveth the Sacrament of Christ.

7. Simple and chaste ought to be the eyes that use to behold the body of Christ; the hands pure and lifted up to heaven, that use to receive the Creatour of heaven and earth. Unto the Priests especially it is said in the Law, Be ye holy, for that I your Lord God am holy.

8. Assist us, Almighty God, with thy grace, that we, who have undertaken the office of Priesthood, may serve thee worthily and devoutly in all purity, and with a good conscience. And if we live not in so great innocency as we ought to do, grant us notwithstanding in due manner to bewail the sins which we have committed; and

and in the ſpirit of humility and with the full purpoſe of a good will to ſerve thee hereafter more fervently.

CHAP. XII.

That he who is to communicate ought to prepare himſelf with great diligence.

The voice of the Beloved.

I Am the lover of purity, and the giver of all ſanctity. I ſeek a pure heart, and there is the place of my reſt. Make ready and adorn for me the great chamber, and I will keep with thee the Paſſeover amongſt my Diſciples. If thou wilt have me come unto thee, and remain with thee; purge out the old leaven, and make clean the habitation of thy heart: ſhut out the whole world, and all the throng of ſins: ſit like a ſparrow ſolitary upon the houſe-top, and think of thy offences in the bitterneſſe of thy ſoul. For every lover prepareth the

best and fairest room for his beloved: and herein is known the affection of him that entertaineth his beloved.

2. Know thou notwithstanding, that the merit of no action of thine is able to make this preparation sufficient, although thou shouldest prepare thy self a whole year together, and think on nothing else. Thou art of my mere grace and favour suffered to come to my table, like a begger invited to dinner to a rich man, who hath nothing else to return him for his benefits, but to humble himself and give him thanks. Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently; not for custome, nor for necessity, but with fear and reverence, and affection; receive the body of thy beloved Lord God, who vouchsafeth to come unto thee. I am he that have called thee, I have commanded it to be done, I will supply what is wanting in thee: come and receive me.

3. When I bestow the grace of devo-

devotion, give thanks to thy God; for it is given thee, not for that thou art worthy, but because I have mercy on thee. If thou have it not, but rather dost feel thy self dry; continue in prayer, sigh and knock, and give not over untill thou art meet to receive some crum or drop of saving grace. Thou hast need of me, not I of thee; neither comest thou to sanctifie me, but I come to sanctifie and make thee better. Thou comest that thou mayst be sanctified by me, and united unto me, that thou mayst receive new grace, and be stirred up again to amendment. Neglect not this grace, but prepare thy heart with all diligence, and receive thy beloved into thy soul.

4. But thou oughtest not onely to prepare thy self to devotion before Communion, but carefully also to conserve thy self therein, after thou hast received the Sacrament. Neither is the carefull guard of thy self afterwards lesse required, then

devout preparation before. For a good guard afterwards, is the beſt preparation again for the obtaining of greater grace; becauſe that a man becometh therefore very indiſpoſed, if he preſently pour himſelf out overmuch to outward comforts. Beware of much talk, remain in ſome ſecret place, and enjoy thy God. For thou haſt him, whom all the world cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughteſt wholly to give thy ſelf, that ſo thou mayſt live hereafter, not in thy ſelf, but in me, without all ſolicitude.

Chap. XIII.

That a devout ſoul ought to deſire with her whole heart, to be united unto Chriſt in the Sacrament.

The voice of the Diſciple.

HOw may I obtain this, O Lord, that I may find thee alone, and open my whole heart unto thee, and

and enjoy thee as my ſoul deſireth? And that no man may look towards me, nor any creature move me or eye me, but thou alone mayſt ſpeak unto me, and I to thee, as the beloved is wont to ſpeak to his beloved, and a friend to banquet with his friend? This I pray for, this I deſire, that I may be wholly united unto thee, and may withdraw my heart from all created things, and more and more, by ſacred Communion and often celebrating, learn to reliſh heavenly and eternall things, O Lord God, when ſhall I be wholly united to thee, and abſorpt by thee, and be altogether forgetfull of my ſelf? Thou in me, and I in thee, and ſo grant us both to continue in one.

2. Thou art truly my beloved, the choiceſt amongſt thouſands, in whom my ſoul is well pleaſed to dwell all the daies of her life. Thou art indeed my peacemaker, in whom is greateſt peace and true reſt, without whom is labour and

sorrow and infinite misery. Thou art indeed a God that hidest thy self, and thy counsell is not with the wicked, but thy speech is with the humble and simple of heart. O Lord, how sweet is thy spirit, who to the end thou mightest shew thy sweetnesse towards thy children, vouchsafest to feed them with the bread which descendeth from heaven, and is full of all sweetnesse! Surely there is no other Nation so great, that hath God nigh unto them, as thou our God art present to all thy faithfull ones, unto whom for their daily comfort, and for the raising up of their hearts to heaven, thou givest thy self to be eaten and enjoyed.

3. For what other nation is there so famous, as the Christian people? or what creature under heaven so beloved, as a religious soul, to whom God himself cometh to feed her with his glorious flesh? O unspeakable grace! O admirable condescent! O infinite love sin-

singularly bestowed upon man! But what shall I give unto the Lord in return of his grace, for so eminent an expression of thy love? There is no other thing more acceptable that I am able to give, then to give my heart wholly to my God, and to unite it most inwardly unto him. Then shall all my inward parts rejoyce, when my soul shall be perfectly united unto God. Then he will say unto me; If thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee. And I will answer him, Vouchsafe, O Lord, to remain with me, and I will gladly be with thee. This is my whole desire, that my heart be united unto thee.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the fervent desire of some devout persons to receive the Body of Christ.

The voice of the Disciple.

O How great is thy goodnesse O Lord, which thou hast laid up

for them that fear thee! When I remember some devout persons who come unto thy Sacrament, O Lord, with greatest devotion and affection, I am oftentimes confounded and blush within my self that I come so formally and coldly to thy Table of the holy Communion, that I remain so dry, and without heart-affection, that I am not wholly inflamed in thy presence, my God, nor so earnestly drawn and affected, as many devout persons have been. who out of a vehement desire of the Communion, and a feeling affection of heart, could not contain themselves from weeping; but with the desire both of soul and body, they earnestly longed after thee, O God the living Fountain, being not otherwise able to alay nor satisfie their hunger, but by receiving thy body with all joy and spirituall greedinesse.

2. O the most ardent faith of those persons! a clear argument of thy sacred presence. For they truly

ly know their Lord in the breaking of bread, whose heart burneth so mightily within them, whilest thou, O blessed Iesus, conversest with them. Such desire and devotion, so vehement love and fervency, is oftentimes far from me. Be mercifull unto me good Iesus, sweet and gracious Lord, and grant me thy poor needy creature, to feel sometimes, at least in this holy Communion, somewhat of thy hearty affectionate love, that my faith may be more strengthened, my hope in thy goodnesse increased, and that my charity once perfectly enflamed, after the tasting of heavenly Manna, may never decay.

3. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to give me the grace I desire, and to visit me most mercifully with the spirit of fervour, when it shall please thee. For although I but not with so great desire as those that are so singularly devoted to thee: yet notwithstanding by thy grace

grace, I desire to have this great inflamed desire, praying and craving that I may participate with all such thy fervent lovers, and be numbred among them in their holy companie.

CHAP. XV.

That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and deniall of our selves.

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to seek the grace of devotion instantly, to ask it earnestly, to expect it patiently and with confidence, to receive it gratefully, to keep it humbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit the term and manner of this heavenly visitation to God, untill it shall please him to come unto thee. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thy self, when thou feelest inwardly little or no devotion, and yet not to be too much dejected, nor to grieve

grieve inordinately. God often giveth in a short moment, that which he hath long time denied: he giveth sometimes in the end, that which in the beginning of prayer he deferred to grant.

2. If grace should be alwaies presently given, and at hand ever with a wish, the weak man could not well bear it. Therefore the grace of devotion is to be expected with good hope and humble patience; yet impute it to thy self and thy sins, when it is not given thee, or when it is secretly taken away. It is sometimes a small matter that hindereth and hideth grace *from us*, if yet it be to be called small, and not rather a great matter, that hindereth so great a good. And if thou remove this, be it great or small, and perfectly overcome it, thou shalt have thy desire.

3. For presently as soon as thou from thy whole heart givest thy self to God, and seekest not this nor that, for thine own pleasure or will,

will, but settlest thy self wholly in him; thou shalt find thy self united and quiet: for nothing will relish so well, and please thee so much, as the good pleasure of the divine will. Whosoever therefore, with a single heart lifteth up his intention to God, and purgeth himself from all inordinate love or dislike of any created thing, he shall be the most fit to receive grace, and meet for the gift of devotion: For the Lord bestoweth his blessings there, where he findeth the vessels empty. And how much the more perfectly one forsaketh these low things, and the more he dieth to himself by contempt of himself: so much the more speedily grace shall come, and enter in more plentifully, and raise up higher the heart that is thus free.

4. Then shall he see, and be filled, and wonder, and his heart shall be enlarged within him; because the hand of the Lord is with him, and he hath put himself wholly into his hands for ever. Behold, so shall

shall the man be blessed, that seeketh God with his whole heart, and busieth not his soul in vain. This man obtaineth the great favour of divine union, in receiving the holy Eucharist; for that he respecteth not his own devotion and comfort, but above all devotion and comfort, the honour and glory of God.

Chap. XVI.

That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and crave his grace.

The voice of the Disciple.

O Most sweet, and loving Lord, whom I now desire to receive with all devotion, thou knowest my infirmity, and the necessity which I endure, with how many sins and evils I am oppressed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled, and defiled. I come unto thee for remedy, I crave of thee comfort and succour; I speak to him that knoweth all things, to whom all my inward parts are open, and who can onely perfectly comfort & help me.

me. Thou knoweſt what good things I ſtand in moſt need of, and how poor I am in virtues.

2. Behold, I ſtand before thee poor and naked, calling for grace, and craving mercy. Refreſh thy hungry beggar, inflame my coldneſſe with the fire of thy love: inlighten my blindneſſe with the brightneſſe of thy preſence. Turn all earthly things to me into bitterneſſe, all things grievous and croſſe into patience, all low and created things into contempt and oblivion. Lift up my heart to thee in heaven, and ſuffer me not to wander upon earth. Be thou onely ſweet unto me from henceforth for evermore: for thou onely art my meat & my drink, my love and my joy, my ſweetneſs & all my good.

3. O that with thy preſence thou wouldſt wholly inflame, burn and conform me unto thy ſelf; that I might be made one ſpirit with thee by the grace of inward union, and by the meltings of ardent love!

Suf-

Suffer me not to go from thee hungry and dry, but deal mercifully with me, as thou haſt oftentimes dealt wonderfully with thy Saints. What marvell is it if I ſhould be wholly enflamed by thee, and die from my ſelf, ſith thou art fire alwaies burning and never decaying, love purifying the heart, and enlightning the underſtanding?

CHAP. XVII.

Of fervent love and vehement deſire to receive Chriſt.

The voice of the Diſciple.

WIth great devotion and ardent love, with moſt hearty affection & fervour I deſire to receive thee, O Lord, as many Saints and devout perſons have deſired thee, when they received thy Sacrament, who were moſt pleaſing unto thee in holineſſe of life, and moſt fervent in devotion. O my God, my everlaſting love, my whole good, my happineſſe without end, I would gladly receive thee with the moſt vehement deſire, and moſt worthy

worthy reverence, that any of the Saints ever had, or could feel.

2. And although I be unworthy to have all those feelings of devotion, yet I offer unto thee the whole affection of my heart, as if I alone had all those highly pleasing inflamed desires: yea and whatsoever also an holy mind can conceive and desire; all that, with greatest reverence and most inward affection, I offer and present unto thee. I desire to reserve nothing to my self, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice my self and all mine unto thee, my Lord God my Creatour, and my Redeemer. I desire to receive thee this day with such affection, reverence, praise and honour, with such gratitude, worthinesse, and love, with such faith, hope, and purity, as thy most holy Mother the glorious Virgin Mary received, and desired thee, when she humbly and devoutly answered the Angel, who declared unto her the mystery of the Incarnation, and said,

said, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done unto thee according to thy word.*

3. And as thy bleſſed Forerunner, the moſt excellent amongſt the Saints, Iohn Baptiſt, chearfully leaped by reaſon of the holy Ghoſt, whileſt he was yet ſhut up in his mothers womb; and afterwards ſeeing Ieſus walking amongſt men, humbling himſelf very much, ſaid with devout affection, *The friend of the Bridegroom that ſtandeth and heareth him, rejoyceth with joy for the voice of the Bridegroom*: ſo I alſo wiſh to be inflamed with great and holy deſires, and to offer my ſelf up to thee with my whole heart. Wherefore I offer alſo and preſent unto thee the joys, fervent affections, mentall exceſſes, and ſupernall illuminations, and heavenly viſions of all devout hearts, with all the virtues and praiſes celebrated and to be celebrated by all creatures in heaven and earth, for my ſelf, and all ſuch as

as are commended to me in prayer orted
that by all thou maist be worthily et th
praised and glorified for ever. my p

4. Receive, my Lord God, my
wishes & desires of giving thee in- That
finite praise and thanks, which ac- th
cording to the measure of thy un-
speakable greatnesse, are most
worthily due unto thee. These I
yield thee, and desire to yield thee
every day and moment, I do en-
treat and invite all heavenly minds, ing
and all thy devout servants, to give men
thanks & praises together with me. in th

5. Let all People, Tribes, and a se
Tongues praise thee, and magni- pre
fie thy holy and sweet name, with wo
great joy and fervent devotion; and star
let all that reverently and devoutly ry
celebrate thy most high Sacrament wa
and receive it with full faith, finde en
grace and mercie at thy hands, and do
pray humbly for me a sinfull crea-
ture. And when they shall have fo
obtained their desired devotion & qu
joyfull union, and depart from thy ar
sacred heavenly Table, well com-
forted

orted and marvellously refreshed, et them vouchsafe to remember my poor soul.

Chap. XVIII.

That man be not a curious searcher of the Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his sense to Faith.

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to beware of curious and unprofitable searching into this most profound Sacrament, if thou wilt not be plunged in the depths of doubts. He that is a searcher of Majesty, shall be oppressed by the glory. God is able to work more then man can understand. A pious and humble inquiry of truth is tolerable, so it be alwaies readie to be taught, and do endeavour to walk in the sound doctrines of the Fathers.

2. Blessed is that simplicitie, that forsaketh the difficult waies of questions, & goeth on in the plain and assured path of Gods Command-

mandments. Many have lost devotion, whilest they would search after high things. Faith and a sincere life are required at thy hands, not height of understanding, nor a diving deep into the mysteries of God. If thou doest not understand, nor conceive those things that are under thee, how shalt thou be able to comprehend those that are above thee? Submit thy self to God, and let thy sense be subject to faith; and the light of knowledge shall be given thee in that degree as shall be profitable and necessarie for thee.

3. Some are grievously tempted about faith and the Sacrament, but this is not to be imputed to them, but rather to the Enemie. Be not thou anxious nor dispute with thy thoughts, neither do thou give answer to the doubts cast in by the Devill; but believe the words of God, believe his Saints and Prophets, and the wicked Enemie will flie from thee. It is oftentimes very

y profitable to the ſervant of God o ſuffer ſuch things. For the De- ill tempteth not unbelievers and inners, whom he alreadie ſecurely oſſeſſeth, but he ſundry waies empteth and vexeth the faithfull nd religious.

4. Go forward therefore with a ineere and undoubted faith, and ome to the Sacrament with un- eigned reverence. And whatſoever hou art not able to underſtand, commit ſecurely to Almighty God. God deceiveth thee not; he is deceived that truſteth too much to himſelf. God walketh with the ſimple, revealeth himſelf to the humble, giveth underſtanding to the little ones, openeth the ſenſe to pure minds, and hideth grace from the curious and proud. Humane reaſon is weak, and may be deceived, but true faith cannot be deceived.

5. All reaſon and naturall ſearch ought to follow faith, not to go before it, nor infringe it. For faith and love

love do here chiefly excell, and work in a hidden manner in this most holy and excellent Sacrament. God, who is everlasting and of infinite power, doth great and inscrutable things in heaven and in earth, and there is no searching out of his wonderfull works, If the works of God were such, as might be easily comprehended by humane reason, they were not to be called wonderfull and unspeakable.

FINIS.